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Change And Continuity: Birth Practices From The Middle Kingdom Through The New Kingdom

Abstract

Birth and fertility were central concerns in everyday life and a focus of popular religious practices in Egypt. Much of the previous scholarly literature on Egyptian fertility practices had approached the subject from conception through birth and early childhood. Still others had narrowed their focus on certain material or contexts. However, neither of these approaches had addressed the extent of change and continuity of birth and fertility practices through time. Given that the period from the Middle Kingdom (2000-1650 BCE) through the New Kingdom (1550-1070 BCE) is roughly a thousand years, with significant religious transformations, a chronological focus is necessary to understand the development of popular religion. The dissertation addresses birth and fertility practices in ancient Egypt in light of the social and religious changes during the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom. This work focuses primarily on the archaeological record of birth and fertility beliefs from tombs, temple, and domestic contexts, as well as discuss birth-related texts, such as medical-magical spells. Through this study, it is clear that there was a clear development of birth practices over time. These rituals did not occur in an exclusively female sphere of influence, with objects associated with men, women, and children. In addition, the customs did not undergo a "democratization," meaning an expansion of previously elite traditions to common people. The material had association with non-elites from the beginning. Likewise, while objects such as nude female figurines and certain amulets occurred all over Egypt, others belonged to regionally specific domains. This work, by examining the temporal and archaeological context of material pertaining to birth and fertility, sheds light on a major aspect of popular religious beliefs.

Degree Type

Dissertation

Degree Name

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Graduate Group

Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations

First Advisor

Joseph Wegner

Keywords

Aha/Bes, Apotropaia, Female figurines, Ipet/Taweret, Medical/Magical Texts

Subject Categories

History of Art, Architecture, and Archaeology

CHANGE AND CONTINUITY: BIRTH PRACTICES FROM THE MIDDLE KINGDOM
THROUGH THE NEW KINGDOM

Charlotte Rose

A DISSERTATION

in

Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2020

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CHANGE AND CONTINUITY: BIRTH PRACTICES FROM THE MIDDLE KINGDOM
THROUGH THE NEW KINGDOM

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2020

Charlotte Beryl Rose

In loving memory of Charlene, whose loving spirit and creativity remain an inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This work would not be possible without the generous support of the Benjamin Franklin Fellowship, as well as the J.R. Koury Endowment Fellowship. I am especially grateful for the staff in the Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations department in University of Pennsylvania for providing me with the support and the academic time to pursue my research.

I am indebted to all who have served on my dissertation committee for this project. Each has provided extensive comments and advice on how to clarify and strengthen my argument, as well as turn my research on disparate material into a cohesive whole. I would especially like to thank Dr. Joseph Wegner, my advisor and chair of the committee. Whenever I had struggled with the enormity of the amount of material on which this work discusses, he always advised ways to cut through the clutter and focus on the major aspects.

In the course of this work, I had needed to consult various museums and scholars about certain objects and texts. I am especially grateful for Rachel Rodabaugh for the insights she provided me about the nature of Egyptian medico-magical spells and the translations of certain terms from the Kahun Gynecological Papyrus. For access to study images of museum objects, I am indebted to Greet Van Deuren of the Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Nathan Pendlebury of the National Museums Liverpool, Dr. Kirsten Neumann of the Oriental Institute of Chicago, Rob Deslongchamps of the Cincinnati Art Museum, Dr. Alice Stevenson of the Petrie Museum, Dr. Carolyn Graves-Brown of the Egypt Centre of Swansea University, the Israel Museum, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

During the duration of this project, I have had to move several times for personal reasons. I would like to thank Dr. Donald Redford and Dr. Elizabeth Walters for their warm welcome and support of my career goals while I lived in State College, Pennsylvania. For providing access to

the Baer Egyptology Library in the University of California Berkeley, I am indebted to Dr. Rita Lucarelli and Dr. Deanna Kiser-Go. I am especially grateful for my colleague and friend Valentina Anselmi. Whenever I had needed to return to Philadelphia for meetings and other requirements of my research, she had generously offered her home as a place to stay. At this point, I regard her and her family as a second family.

Finally, I am grateful for the unconditional support of my family. I would like to thank my parents, whose love, guidance, and appreciation of footnotes are with me in whatever I pursue. Most importantly, I wish to thank my loving and supportive partner, Jason, and my two cats, Roux and Sekhmet, who provide unending amusement and cuteness.

ABSTRACT

CHANGE AND CONTINUITY: BIRTH PRACTICES FROM THE MIDDLE KINGDOM THROUGH THE NEW KINGDOM

Charlotte Beryl Rose

Dr. Joseph Wegner

Birth and fertility were central concerns in everyday life and a focus of popular religious practices in Egypt. Much of the previous scholarly literature on Egyptian fertility practices had approached the subject from conception through birth and early childhood. Still others had narrowed their focus on certain material or contexts. However, neither of these approaches had addressed the extent of change and continuity of birth and fertility practices through time. Given that the period from the Middle Kingdom (2000-1650 BCE) through the New Kingdom (1550-1070 BCE) is roughly a thousand years, with significant religious transformations, a chronological focus is necessary to understand the development of popular religion. The dissertation addresses birth and fertility practices in ancient Egypt in light of the social and religious changes during the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom. This work focuses primarily on the archaeological record of birth and fertility beliefs from tombs, temple, and domestic contexts, as well as discuss birth-related texts, such as medical-magical spells. Through this study, it is clear that there was a clear development of birth practices over time. These rituals did not occur in an exclusively female sphere of influence, with objects associated with men, women, and children. In addition, the customs did not undergo a “democratization,” meaning an expansion of previously elite traditions to common people. The material had association with non-elites from the beginning. Likewise, while objects such as nude female figurines and certain amulets occurred all over Egypt, others belonged to regionally specific domains. This work, by

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ABBREVIATIONS

ÄA	Ägyptologische Abhandlungen (Wiesbaden)
AAA	<i>Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology</i> (Liverpool)
AAWL	Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Leiden (Leiden)
ACE Reports	Australian Centre for Egyptology Reports (Sidney/Warminster/Oxford)
AeA	Ägyptologische Abhandlungen (Wiesbaden)
AEM	<i>Ancient Egypt Magazine</i> (UK)
AeUAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament (Bamburg/Wiesbaden)
AfO	Archiv für Orientforschung (Berlin/Graz/Vienna)
AfR	<i>Archiv für Religionswissenschaft</i>
ÄgLev	<i>Ägypten und Levante: Zeitschrift für ägyptische Archäologie und deren Nachbargebiete</i> (Vienna)
AHAW	Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse (Heidelberg)
AP	Asyut Project
<i>Arch. f. Gynäk</i>	<i>Archiv für Gynäkologie</i>
ASAE	<i>Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte</i> (Cairo)
ASAW	Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig. Philologisch-Historische Klasse
ASE	Archaeological Survey of Egypt Memoirs, EEF (London)
BACE	<i>Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology</i> (North Ryde)
BAe	Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca (Brussels)
BAR	British Archaeological Reports
BdE	<i>Bibliothèque d'Étude</i> (IFAO, Cairo)
Berlin (ÄM)	Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung (Berlin)
BES	<i>Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar</i> (New York)
BIÉ	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte</i> (Cairo)
BIFAO	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale</i> (Cairo)
BiOr	<i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i> (Leiden)
BM	British Museum
BMFA	<i>Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts</i> (Boston)
BMMA	<i>Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art</i> (New York)
BMRAH	<i>Bulletin des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire</i> (Brussels)
BMSAES	<i>British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan</i> (London)

BOREAS	Boreas: Uppsala Studies in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Civilizations (Uppsala)
Brussels	Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire (Brussels)
Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i>	B. Bruyère, <i>Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh</i> (PIFAO)
BSAE	British School of Archaeology in Egypt (London)
BSAK	<i>Beihefte SAK</i> (Hamburg)
BSEG	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'Égyptologie Genève</i> (Geneva)
BSFE	<i>Bulletin de la Société française d'Égyptologie</i> (Paris)
<i>Bull. Soc. Fr. Hist. Méd.</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société Française d'Histoire de la Médecine</i> (Paris)
CAD	<i>Chicago Assyrian Dictionary</i> (Chicago)
CAJ	<i>Cambridge Archaeological Journal</i> (Cambridge)
CASAE	Cahiers supplémentaires des ASAE (Cairo)
CdE	<i>Chronique d'Égypte</i> (Brussels)
CT	Coffin Texts
CGC	Catalogue General du Musée du Caire (series, Cairo Museum)
CoA	<i>City of Akhenaten</i>
CRAIBL	<i>Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres</i> (Paris)
Damascus NM	National Museum (Damascus)
DAWW	Denkschriften der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Phil.-hist. Klasse
DE	<i>Discussions in Egyptology</i> (Oxford)
Dendera	<i>Le temple de Dendera</i> , 5 vols., ed. E. Chassinat, 1934-1952 (Cairo)
EA	Egyptian Archaeology (London)
Edinburgh NMS	National Museum of Scotland (Edinburgh)
EEF	Egypt Exploration Fund (London)
EES	Egypt Exploration Society
EgUit	Egyptologische Uitgaven (Leiden)
EVO	<i>Egitto e Vicino Oriente</i> (Pisa)
<i>Excavations between Abu Simbel</i>	<i>Excavations between Abu Simbel and the Sudan Frontier</i> (OINE 1-10; Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1967-1993)
FIFAO	Fouilles de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale (Cairo)
Florence	Museo Egizio (Florence)
Garstang	Garstang Museum of Archaeology (Liverpool)
Glasgow EGNN	Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum (Glasgow)

<i>GM</i>	<i>Göttinger Miszellen</i> (Göttingen)
GOF	Göttinger Orientforschungen, IV. Reihe, Ägypten (Wiesbaden)
<i>Grundriß</i>	H. Grapow et al., <i>Grundriß der Medizin der alten Ägypter</i> , V.1-9 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1954-73).
<i>HTBM</i>	<i>Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae etc. The British Museum</i> , vol. I-XII (British Museum Publications, London)
Hannig, Äg. Wb.	R. Hannig, <i>Ägyptischen Wörterbuch</i> (Wiesbaden: P. von Zabern, 2003-2006).
HAS	Harvard African Studies (Cambridge, Mass.)
Hasan, Giza	S. Hasan, <i>Excavations at Giza</i> , 10 Vols. (Oxford/Cairo, 1929-1960)
<i>IKG</i>	W.M.F. Petrie, <i>Illahun, Kahun, and Gurob</i> (London: D. Nutt, 1891).
<i>JANER</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions</i> (Leiden)
<i>JARCE</i>	<i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i> (Cairo)
JE	Journal d'Entrée (Cairo Museum)
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i> (EES, London)
<i>JEgH</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian History</i> (Swansea)
<i>JEOL</i>	<i>Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-egyptisch Genootschap Ex Oriente Lux</i> (Leiden)
<i>Jericho</i>	K.M. Kenyon, <i>Excavations at Jericho</i> , 5 Vols. (London: British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, 1960-1983).
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i> (Chicago)
Junker, Giza	H. Junker, <i>Gîza. Berichte über die von Akademie der wissenschaften in Wien auf gemeinsame kosten mit dr. Wilhelm Pelizaeus unternommenen grabungen auf dem friedhof des alten reiches bei den pyramiden von Gîza</i> , V.1-12 (Wien, Leipzig: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1929-55).
<i>Karnak</i>	<i>Les Cahiers de Karnak. Centre franco-égyptien d'étude des temples de Karnak</i> (Cairo)
KAW	Kulturgeschichte der Antiken Welt (Mainz am Rhein)
<i>Kêmi</i>	<i>Kêmi: Revue de philologie et d'archéologie égyptienne et coptes</i> (Paris)
<i>KGH</i>	W.M.F. Petrie, <i>Kahun, Gurob, and Hawara</i> (London: Paul, Trench, Trübner, and Co., 1890).
<i>KMT</i>	<i>KMT: A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt</i> (San Francisco)
KRI	K.A. Kitchen, <i>Ramesside Inscriptions, Historical and Biographical</i> . I - VII (Oxford, 1969-1990)
<i>Kush</i>	<i>Kush: Journal of the Sudan Antiquities Service</i> (Khartoum)
<i>Kyphi</i>	<i>Kyphi, Bulletin du Cercle d'égyptologie Victor Loret</i>
<i>LÄ</i>	<i>Lexikon der Ägyptologie</i> , 7 vols., ed. W. Helck, E. Otto, W. Westendorf (Wiesbaden: 1972/5).

LAAA	See AAA.
LD	K. R. Lepsius, <i>Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien</i> , 6 vols., (Berlin: 1849-1859).
LDA	Les Dossiers d'Archeologie
Leiden (RMO)	Rijksmuseum van Oudheden (Leiden)
Leitz, <i>Lexikon</i>	C. Leitz, <i>Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen</i> (OLA 110-116, 129).
Lesko, <i>Dict. LE</i>	L. Lesko, <i>A Dictionary of Late Egyptian</i> , V. 1-5. Berkeley, CA: B.C. Scribe Publ., 1982-1990.
Liverpool	World Museum (Liverpool)
Madrid MAN	Museo Arqueológico Nacional (Madrid)
<i>Manuel</i>	J. Vandier, <i>Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne</i> , 6 Vols. (Paris, A. et J. Picard, 1952-1978).
MAOG	<i>Mitteilungen der Altorientalischen Gesellschaft</i> (Leipzig)
MÄS	<i>Münchener Ägyptologische Studien</i> (Berlin/Munich/Mainz am Rhein)
MDAIK	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo</i> (Mainz/Cairo/Berlin/Wiesbaden)
MDIAAK	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Instituts für Ägyptische Altertumskunde in Kairo</i> (Berlin)
<i>MedMus-Bull</i>	<i>Medelhavsmuseet Bulletin</i> (Stockholm)
MFA	Museum of Fine Arts (Boston)
MIO	<i>Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung</i> (Berlin)
MKS	Middle Kingdom Studies
MM	Medelhavsmuseet (Stockholm)
MMA	Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York)
MMAEE	Metropolitan Museum of Art, Egyptian Expedition (New York)
MMJ	<i>Metropolitan Museum Journal</i> (New York)
MVEOL	<i>Mededelingen en Verhandelingen Ex Oriente Lux</i> (Leiden)
Moscow	Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts (Moscow)
Munich ÄS	Staatliche Sammlung für Ägyptische Kunst (Munich)
NAWG	<i>Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Phil.-hist. Klasse</i> (Göttingen)
NM	National Museum of Denmark (Copenhagen)
O.	Ostrakon
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis (Freiburg/Göttingen)

ODM	Ostraca of Deir el-Medina number
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications (Chicago)
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta (Louvain)
OMRO	<i>Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden</i> (Leiden)
Or	<i>Orientalia. Commentarii periodici Pontificii instituti biblici, Nova Series</i> (Rome)
PAM	Rockefeller Archaeological Museum [formerly Palestine Archaeological Museum] (East Jerusalem)
Petrie, <i>Gaza</i>	W. M. F. Petrie, <i>Ancient Gaza</i> , 4 volumes. ERA 53-56. London: BSAE, 1931-1934.
PdÄ	<i>Probleme der Ägyptologie</i> (Leiden/Boston/Köln)
Philadelphia	University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Philadelphia)
PM	B. Porter and R.L.B. Moss, <i>Topographical bibliography of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic texts, reliefs and paintings</i> , 8 Vols. (Oxford).
Price	F.G.H. Price, <i>A catalogue of the Egyptian antiquities in the possession of F. G. Hilton Price</i> (London : Bernard Quaritch, 1897).
<i>Proc. Roy. Soc. Med.</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine</i> (United Kingdom)
PSBA	<i>Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology</i> (London)
PT	Pyramid Texts
QDAP	<i>Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine</i>
RA	<i>Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale</i> (Paris)
RAC	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i>
RdE	<i>Revue d'Égyptologie</i> (Paris)
REA	<i>Revue de l'Égypte ancienne</i> (Paris)
RecTrav	<i>Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes</i> (Paris)
RITA	K.A. Kitchen, <i>Ramesside Inscriptions Translated & Annotated: Translations</i> , I ff. (Oxford, 1993 ff.)
RSF	<i>Rivista di Studi Fenici</i>
SAGA	Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altägyptens (Heidelberg)
SAK	<i>Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur</i> (Hamburg)
SAOC	<i>Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisation</i> (Chicago)
SASAE	<i>Supplément aux ASAE</i> (Cairo)
SAT	Studien zum Altägyptischen Totenbuch (Wiesbaden)

SBAW	Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Abteilung (München)
SDAIK	Sonderschrift des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo (Wiesbaden)
<i>Sphinx</i>	<i>Sphinx: Revue critique embrassant le domaine entier de l'égyptologie.</i> (Uppsala)
Tübingen	Museum der Universität Tübingen (Tübingen)
UC	University College London (Petrie Museum)
UC OdU	W. M. F. Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> (ERA 42; London: BSAE, 1927)
UGAÄ	Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ägyptens (Hildesheim/Leipzig/Berlin)
<i>Urk.</i>	H. Sethe, H.W. Helck, H. Schäfer, H. Grapow, O. Firchow, <i>Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums</i> , 8 vols. (Leipzig/Berlin: 1903-1957)
USE	Uppsala Studies in Egyptology (Uppsala)
VA	<i>Varia Aegyptiaca</i> (San Antonio)
VDI	Vestnik Drevnej Istorii (Revue d'Histoire ancienne) (Moscow/Leningrad)
VDOG	Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orientgesellschaft
WAM	Walters Art Museum (Baltimore)
<i>Wb.</i>	A. Erman and W. Grapow, <i>Wörterbuch der ägyptische Sprache</i> , 7 vols. (1926-1931).
ZÄS	<i>Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde</i> (Berlin/Leipzig)
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i> (Leipzig/Wiesbaden)

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction and Previous Scholarship

While there is a significant set of information on various objects and texts involved in Egyptian birth practices, no scholarship has approached the subject in terms of an integrative study aimed at understanding diachronic change in birth practices. What happens as you cross the threshold from the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period into the New Kingdom? What changes, and why? How do these changes relate to the wider modifications in religious and magical practices in popular religion?

This work examines this issue by analysis of primarily the material culture and iconography, as well as reviews texts in translation, relating to birth practices during the period from the Middle Kingdom starting in the 11th Dynasty through the Second Intermediate Period and New Kingdom. Any material discussed outside this timeframe has direct parallels to material from either the Middle Kingdom or New Kingdom. The purpose of this investigation is to consider whether evidence exists for significant changes in beliefs and practices related to childbirth and fertility.

Overall, the subsequent chapters will demonstrate that birth objects and related practices gradually shifted over time in terms of what can be shown and aspects of iconography to emphasize. The apotropaic and female imagery of the Middle Kingdom coalesced into the bedroom-iconography of the New Kingdom, while materials like birth bricks, cowrie shells, and handmade nude female figurines showed continuity. In some cases, certain Middle Kingdom objects, such as some apotropaic figures and dwarf figurines, represented continuations of prior Old Kingdom motifs. Birth material from the Middle Kingdom appeared divided between those associated with solar birth and female fertility. While the former had imagery related to the daily

rebirth of the sun god, the latter pertained to human, rather than divine, models of fertility, such as birth-beds, figurines, and certain non-figural amulets. Both types, particularly the former, occurred in predominantly funerary contexts, likely due to decorum restrictions. In contrast, the New Kingdom evidence indicates an official, overwhelmingly domestic, fertility corpus, with production of many objects in centralized workshops.

1.1.1 General Discussions

A number of scholars have discussed childbirth in ancient Egypt, usually from a nonchronological approach.¹ Others reviewed the subject as part of an analysis of gender,² or of erotic themes.³ Nifosi's comparative study of Egyptian and ancient Near Eastern birth practices

¹ E. Feucht, "Geburt, Kindheit, Jugend, und Ausbildung im alten Ägypten," in *Zur Sozialgeschichte der Kindheit*, ed. Jochen Martin and August Nitschke (Freiburg/München: Verlag Karl Alber, 1986), 225-265; E. Strouhal, *Life of the Ancient Egyptians* (Norman, OK: Oklahoma University Press, 1992); G. Robins, "Women and children in peril: pregnancy, birth, and infant mortality in ancient Egypt," *KMT* 5.4 (1994-1995): 24-3; E. Feucht, *Das Kind im alten Ägypten. Die Stellung des Kindes in Familie und Gesellschaft nach altägyptischen Texten und Darstellungen* (Frankfurt, New York: Campus, 1995); R. Janssen and J.J. Janssen, *Growing up in ancient Egypt* (London: The Rubicon Press, 1996); E. Feucht, "Das Weg in der Leben," in *Naissance et petite enfance dans l'antiquité : Actes du colloque de Fribourg 28 Novembre – 1^{er} Décembre 2001*, ed. V. Dasen (Fribourg: Academic Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2004), 33-53; E.V. MacArthur, "Fertility and Birth Rituals," in *The life of Meresamun: A temple singer in ancient Egypt*, ed. Emily Teeter and Janet H. Johnson (OMP 29; Chicago: Oriental Institute, 2009), 76-81; E. Strouhal and H. Vymazalová, "Mother and child care," in *Medicine of the ancient Egyptians*, ed. E. Strouhal, B. Vachala, and H. Vymazalová (Cairo; New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2010); S. Töpfer, "The physical activity of parturition in ancient Egypt: textual and epigraphically sources," *Dynamis* 34.2 (2014): 317-337; J. Aruz, "The Nude Female and the Iconography of Birth," *BES* 19 (2015): 85-102.

² B. Lesko, "Researching the role of women in ancient Egypt," *KMT* (Winter 1994/1995): 14-23; L. Meskell, "Egyptian social dynamics the evidence of age, sex and class from domestic and mortuary contexts," (Ph.D. Diss., University of Cambridge, 1997); T.G. Wilfong, *Women and gender in ancient Egypt. From Prehistory to Late Antiquity* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, 1997); L. Meskell, *Archaeologies of social life. Age, sex, Class et cetera in ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999); T. DuQuesne, "Gender, class, and devotion: social and demographic aspects of the Salakhana stelae," *Discussions in Egyptology*, 63 (2005): 40-57; T.G. Wilfong, "Gender in ancient Egypt," in *Egyptian Archaeology*, ed. Willecke Wendrich (Chichester, U.K.; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 164-179.

³ K. Myśliwiec, *Eros on the Nile* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998); G. Robins, "Ancient Egyptian sexuality," *Discussions in Egyptology* 11 (1988): 533-551; G. Robins, "Dress, undress, and the representation of fertility and potency in New Kingdom Egyptian art," in *Sexuality in ancient art: Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Italy*, ed. N. B. Kampen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 27-40; Luis Manuel de Araújo, *Erotismo e sexualidade no antigo Egito* (Lisboa: Edições Colibri, 2012).

has provided an overview of customs spanning the Second Millennium to the Roman Period.⁴ Likewise, Hansen's dissertation on Egyptian reproductive concepts and practices has spanned a large time-frame, from ancient to modern times, with more focus on the relationship between Graeco-Roman traditions and those of modern periods.⁵ Roth has considered the roles Egyptians ascribed to males and females in matters of fertility and conception.⁶ In her recent work, Marshall primarily examined the medical-magical texts discussing childbirth, as well as birth bricks, ivory wands, and the *psš-kf*, in an overarching approach.⁷ Manniche has reviewed Egyptian beliefs towards the womb in religious texts as well as with objects like *menat*-collars and the so-called “paddle dolls.”⁸ Likewise, there has been some scholarship comparing Egyptian birth practices to those from the Ancient Near East.⁹

In addition to the generalized studies, other works focused on material from certain time periods. Recently, a significant amount of scholarship has focused on the Middle Kingdom.¹⁰

⁴ A. Nifosi, "Childbirth practices and beliefs in ancient Egypt and in Ancient Near Eastern documents, in the Talmud, and in the Bible: a comparative study based on written sources and material artefacts," in *SOMA 2012: identity and connectivity: proceedings of the 16th Symposium on Mediterranean Archaeology, Florence, Italy, 1-3 March 2012*, ed. Luca Bombardieri et al. (BAR IS 2581 (I); Oxford: Archaeopress, 2013), 97-102.

⁵ N.B. Hansen, "Motherhood in the mother of the world: Continuity and change in reproductive concepts and practices in Egypt from ancient to modern times," (Ph.D diss., University of Chicago, 2006).

⁶ A.M. Roth, "Father earth, mother sky: ancient Egyptian beliefs about conception and fertility," in *Reading the body: representations and remains in the archaeological record*, ed. Alison E. Rautman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 187-201.

⁷ A. Marshall, *Maternité et petite enfance en Égypte ancienne* (Collection Champollion. Monaco: Éditions du Rocher, 2015).

⁸ L. Manniche, "In the Womb," *BACE* 17 (2006): 97-112.

⁹ P. Galpaz-Feller, "Pregnancy and birth in the Bible and ancient Egypt (comparative study)," *Biblische Notizen* 102 (2000): 42-53; K. McGeough, "Birth bricks, potters' wheels, and Exodus 1, 16," *Biblica* 87.3 (2006): 305-318.

¹⁰ S. Quirke, "Women of Lahun (Egypt 1800 BC)," in *Archaeology and women: ancient and modern issues*, ed. Sue Hamilton, Ruth D. Whitehouse, and Katherine I. Wright (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2007), 246-262; K. Szpakowska, "Birth," in *Daily life in ancient Egypt: recreating Lahun*, ed. Kasia Maria Szpakowska (Malden, MA.: Blackwell, 2008), 23-44; A.M. Gnirs, "Nipferdstosszähne und Schlangenstäbe: Zu den magischen Geräten des so genannten Ramesseumsfundes." In *Texte - Theben - Tonfragmente: Festschrift für Günter Burkard*, ed. Dieter Kessler et al. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2009), 128-156; E. Morris, "Paddle dolls and performance," *JARCE* 47 (2011): 71-103; K. Szpakowska, "Infancy in a rural community: a case study of early childhood at Lahun," in *Proceedings of the Tenth*

However, most research on Egyptian birth and fertility practices, partly due to the preponderance of evidence, has focused on the New Kingdom, especially the towns of Amarna and Deir el-Medina.¹¹ Since both these town sites, similar to Lahun in the Middle Kingdom, are state-built operations instead of organic towns, some scholars doubted how representative material from these areas are of domestic religious practice.¹² However, much of the domestic religious material from these locations also occurred in other sites as well.

International Congress of Egyptologists: University of the Aegean, Rhodes. 22-29 May 2008 1, eds. P. Kousoulis and N. Lazaridis (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 885-897; E. Morris, "Middle Kingdom Clappers, Dancers, Birth Magic, and the Reinvention of Ritual," in *Company of Images: Modelling the Imaginary World of Middle Kingdom Egypt (2000-1500 BC): Proceedings of the International Conference of the EPOCHS Project held 18th-20th September 2014 at UCL, London*, ed. G. Miniaci, M. Betro, S. Quirke (Leuven: Peeters, OLA 262, 2017), 285-335.

¹¹ F. Friedman, "Aspects of domestic life and religion," in *Pharaoh's Workers: The villagers of Deir el Medina*, ed. Leonard Lesko (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 95-117; L. Meskell, "An archaeology of social relations in an Egyptian village," *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 5.3 (Sep. 1998): 209-243; J. Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina: A study of the status and roles of the female inhabitants in the workmen's community during the Ramesside Period* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut Voor Het Nabije Oosten, 2001); L. Meskell, *Private life in New Kingdom Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); A. Stevens, "The Material Evidence for Domestic Religion at Amarna and Preliminary Remarks on its Interpretation," *JEA* 89 (2003): 143-168; C. Spieser, "Femmes et divinités enceintes dans l'Egypte du Nouvel Empire," in *Naissance et petite enfance dans l'Antiquité: actes du colloque de Fribourg, 28 novembre - 1er décembre 2001*, ed. Veronique Dasen (OBO 203; Freiburg (Schweiz): Academic Press, 2004), 55-70; A. Koltsida, "Domestic space and gender roles in ancient Egyptian village households: a view from Amarna workmen's village and Deir el-Medina," *British School at Athens Studies* 15 (2007): 121-127; B. Lesko, "Household and domestic religion in ancient Egypt," in *Household and family religion in antiquity*, ed. John Boder and Saul M. Olyan (Oxford and Maldon, MA.: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2008), 197-209; R. Ritner, "Household religion in ancient Egypt," in *Household and family religion in antiquity*, ed. John Boder and Saul M. Olyan (Oxford and Maldon, MA.: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2008), 171-196; A. Stevens, "Domestic religious practices," in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, ed. J. Dieleman and W. Wendrich (Los Angeles: University of California Los Angeles, 2009), <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/7s07628w>; E. Teeter, "Household cults," in *The life of Merasamun: A temple singer in ancient Egypt*, ed. Emily Teeter and Janet H. Johnson (OIM 29; Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2009), 71-5; S. Mota, "The household religion in ancient Egypt: what do the archaeological evidences tell us?" *Hathor: Studies of Egyptology* 1 (2012): 31-61; L. Weiss, *Religious Practice at Deir el-Medina* (Leuven: Peeters, 2015).

¹² B. Kemp, "How religious were the ancient Egyptians?," *CAJ* 5 (1995): 24-54; M. Luiselli, "The personal approach to the divine in Ancient Egypt," in *Sacred and Profane: treasures of Ancient Egypt from the Myers Collection, Eton College and University of Birmingham*, ed. E. Geroganteli and M. Bommas (Birmingham: University of Birmingham and Fellows of Eton College, 2010), 79.

1.1.2 Birth Deities

Several deities had roles pertaining to fertility, birth, and the protection of women and children: Hathor, Aha/Bes, Ipet/Taweret, and Heqet. As seen in artifacts during the period of study, their popularity and the types of material culture associated with their worship shifted over time. One difficulty in the study is the predominance of unprovenanced materials, especially amulets, compared to provenanced exemplars.

Hathor, as goddess involved in fertility, love, and the afterlife, has been subject to much study. Scholarship has discussed her various roles and the nature of her worship,¹³ as well as certain objects containing her image.¹⁴ A major question in examining the material culture surrounding this goddess is which role of hers was associated with the objects, particularly Hathor as a cow.

¹³ M.-L. Buhl, "The goddesses of the Egyptian tree cult," *JNES* 6 (1947): 80-97; R.A. Gillam, "Priestesses of Hathor: Their Function, Decline and Disappearance," *JARCE* 32 (1995): 211-237; C. Spieser, "Meskenet et les Sept Hathors en Egypte ancienne," in *Des fata aux fees: regards croises de l'antiquite a nos jours*, ed. Véronique Dasen (Lausanne: Université de Lausanne, 2011), 63-92; Z. Horváth, "Hathor and her festivals at Lahun," in *The world of Middle Kingdom Egypt (2000 - 1550 BC): contributions on archaeology, art, religion, and written sources*, V. 1, eds. Gianluca Miniaci and Wolfram Grajetski (London: Golden House, 2015), 125-144.

¹⁴ C. Karlin "Le Sanctuaire d'Hathor" in *Mirgissa I*, ed. J. Vercoutter (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1970), 307-362; E. Hornung and E. Staehelin, *Skarabäen und andere Siegelamulette aus Basler Sammlungen. Ägyptische Denkmäler in der Schweiz Bd. 1* (Mainz: P. von Zabern, 1976), 95; G. Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, 1993).

The protective god Aha/Bes is more understood. A number of works have discussed his origins and role in Egyptian religion,¹⁵ as well as his occurrence on artifacts.¹⁶ Related to this god is the goddess Ipet/Taweret, whose role as a goddess protecting pregnant women and children has been the subject of scholarship.¹⁷ Artifacts containing her image have also come under scrutiny.¹⁸

¹⁵ J. Krall, "Über den ägyptischen Gott Bes," in *Das Heroon von Gjölbashi-Tyrsa*, Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses 9, ed. Otto Benndorf (Vienna: A. Holzhausen, 1889), 72-96; G. Michailidis, "Bes aux divers aspects," *BIÉ* 45 (1963-1964): 53-93; J.F. Romano, "The origin of the Bes image," *BES* 2 (1980): 39-56; E. Bresciani, "Un nuovo documento della devozione a Bes protettore della maternità," in *The intellectual heritage of Egypt: Studies presented to László Kákósy on the occasion of his 60th birthday*, ed. Ulrich Luft (Budapest: Univ. Loránd Eötvös Chaire d'Égyptologie, 1992), 81-83; D. Meeks, "Le nom du dieu Bes et ses implications mythologiques," in *The Intellectual heritage of Egypt*, 423-436; L.D. Gómez, "Bes, Ptah y Ptah-Pataeco," in *Actas del III Congreso español de Antiguo Oriente Próximo: Huelva, del 30 de septiembre al 3 de octubre de 2003*, ed. C. García Sanz and P. Rufete Tomico, vol. 2. (Huelva: Diputación provincial de Huelva, 2004), 127-148; M.I. Toro Rueda, *Nacimiento y protección en el Mediterráneo: el caso de Bes* (Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2006).

¹⁶ W. A. Ward, "A unique Beset figurine," *Orientalia* 41 (1972): 149-59; K. Bosse-Griffiths, "A Beset amulet from the Amarna Period," *JEA* 63 (1977): 98-106; V. Wilson, "The iconography of Bes with particular reference to the Cypriot evidence," *Levant* 7 (1975): 77-103; J.R. Ogdon, "A Bes amulet from the Royal Tomb at El-'Amarna," *JEA* 67 (1981): 178-179; J.F. Romano, "The Bes-image in pharaonic Egypt" (PhD. diss., New York University, 1989); Y. Volokhine, "Dieux, masques et hommes: a propos de la formation de l'iconographie de Bes," *Bulletin de la société d'égyptologie Geneve* 18 (1994): 81-95; P.J. Cowie, "Chapter 14B: Bes Amulets from Areas Q and P," in *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean 1989-1996, volume I: from the Late Bronze Age IIB to the Medieval period*, ed. Amihai Mazar (Jerusalem: IES, 2006), 514-516.

¹⁷ R. Gundlach, "Thoeris," *LÄ* 6 (1986): 494-497; J. Weingarten, *The Transformation of Egyptian Taweret into the Minoan Genius: A Study in cultural Transmission in the Middle Bronze Age* (Partille: Paul Åströms, 1991); M. El-Kinawy, "Die Göttin Thoeris von der Vorgeschichte bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches," *GM* 166 (1998): 19-21; J. Bulté, "Une 'Thouréris' are et couronnée en 'faïence à pois,'" *RdÉ* 54 (2003): 1-29; I. Vezzani, "Osservazioni sul culto della dea Thoeris a Deir el-Medina," in *L'Egitto in età Ramesside: atti del Convegno Chianciano Terme 17-18 dicembre 2009*, ed. Daniela Picchi (Milano: Silvana Editoriale, 2011), 81-7; S. Ceruti, "La Percezione del mostruoso nell'antico Egitto: il Caso della Dea-Ippopotamo," *Monstra: costruzione e percezione delle entità ibride e mostruose nel Mediterraneo antico*, V. 1, ed. Igor Baglioni, (Roma: Quasar, 2013), 17-28.

¹⁸ B. George, "Ein löwenköpfe Nilpferdgöttin in Stockholm," *Medelhavsmuseet Bulletin* 12 (1977): 38-44; H. Brandl, "Die Schutzgottheiten Sched und Thoeris in Amarna: die Stele Cambridge E. 31. 1937 und das Polytheismusphänomen unter Echnaton," in *Begegnungen: Antike Kulturen im Niltal. Festgabe für Erika Endesfelder, Karl-Heinz Priese, Walter Friedrich Reinecke, Steffen Wenig*, ed. Arnst, Caris-Beatrice, Ingelore Hafemann, and Angelika Lohwasser (Leipzig: Wodtke und Stegbauer, 2001), 91-106; R.T. Sparks, "The Taweret workshop: Nicholson Museum 00.107 and related vessels," in *Egyptian art in the Nicholson Museum, Sydney*, ed. Karin N. Sowada and Boyo G. Ockinga (Sydney: Meditarch, 2006), 241-61; S. Ceruti, "The Hippopotamus Goddess Carrying a Crocodile on her Back: an iconographical Motif distinctive of the Late Middle Kingdom," in *Company of Images: Modelling the Imaginary World of Middle Kingdom Egypt (2000-1500 BC): Proceedings of the International Conference of the EPOCHS Project held 18th-20th September 2014 at UCL, London*, ed. G. Miniaci, M. Betro, S. Quirke (Leuven: Peeters, OLA 262, 2017), 93-123; M. Stoof, *Pferd, Nilpferd und Thoeris - Motive auf Siegelamuletten im alten Ägypten* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2017).

Though less popular than Aha/Bes and Ipet/Taweret, Egyptians invoked frog-goddess Heqet as an important figure surrounding childbirth. In addition, frog-headed deities had roles in relation to creation and the afterlife. Given this mixed aspect of the frog, previous scholarship has questioned the nature of objects depicting this animal.¹⁹

1.1.3 Human Fertility

In addition to directly calling upon deities for fertility and successful childbirth, Egyptians also used other objects in reference to human fecundity. This material includes figurines of dwarfs, woman-shaped vessels, nude female figurines, and bed models.

Ballod wrote the first comprehensive work on dwarfs, discussing a number of the then-known figurines.²⁰ Subsequent works had discussed them and their religious symbolism in more detail, particularly in relation to Aha/Bes and the later deity Ptah-Pataikos.²¹ In other publications, scholars had considered dwarf figures in the same category as the faience animal figurines.²²

¹⁹ Hornung and Staehelin, *Skarabäen*, 112-3; P. Lévêque, *Les Grenouilles dans l'Antiquité: Cultes et mythes des grenouilles en Grèce et ailleurs* (Paris: Editions de Fallois, 1999); R. Lobban, "Frogs in Ancient Egypt and Nubia," *Cahiers Caribéens d'Égyptologie* 7-8 (2005): 153-167; M. Le Men, "La grenouille dans l'Égypte ancienne (objets de la collection de l'Institut d'Égyptologie V. Loret)," *Kyphi* 5 (2006): 87-95; J. Kremler, "On interpreting the meaning of amulets and other objects using the frog motif as an example," in *Egyptology in Australia and New Zealand 2009: proceedings of the Conference held in Melbourne, September 4th-8th*, ed. C.M. Knoblauch and J.C. Gill (BAR 2355; Oxford: Archaeopress, 2012), 97-104; K.S. Kolta, "Ei, Hase, und Frosch: Symbole für Leben und Auferstehung bei Ägyptern und Kopten," in *"Vom Leben umfassen": Ägypten, das Alte Testament, und das Gespräch der Religionen Gedenkschrift für Manfred Görg*, ed. S. J. Wimmer and G. Gafus (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2014), 269-278.

²⁰ F. Ballod, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte der zwerghaften Götter in Ägypten* (Moskau: H. Liessner & D. Sobko, 1913).

²¹ J. Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals: Egyptian art in the Middle Kingdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 121-2. Cats. 114-115; M. J. Raven, "A puzzling pataekos," *OMRO* 67 (1987): 7-47; Gómez, "Bes, Ptah y Ptah-Pataeco.," 127-48; V. Dasen, *Dwarfs of ancient Egypt and Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); S. Quirke, "Statuette of a female dwarf and baby," in *Ancient Egypt transformed*, 202-203, Cat. 134.; Quirke, Steven. "Stand in the shape of a male dwarf," in *Ancient Egypt transformed*, 205, Cat. 139.

²² Ex: Miniaci, "Unbroken Stories," 235-284.

One of the features of the New Kingdom are woman-shaped vessels, either of alabaster or pottery. These objects have features, such as pregnant bellies and children, that are fertility-related.²³ There are two types, each seemingly serving a different purpose: 1) pregnant-woman jars,²⁴ and 2) mother's-milk vessels.²⁵

Initially considered "concubines for the dead,"²⁶ nude female figurines, spanning from the Middle Kingdom to beyond the New Kingdom, are now usually considered symbols of fertility. Pinch created the first comprehensive typology of these figurines, citing hundreds of examples from tomb, temple, and domestic settings.²⁷ Pinch's division of the female figurines into six different types, with hand-modelled types distinguished from her later modelled types, has been the mainstay typology on these objects. Since then, more recent publications of excavated figurines have either stayed with Pinch's typology²⁸ or came up with their own site-specific divisions.²⁹ Recent work on so-called "paddle-dolls" indicate that these objects are a

²³ C. Desroches Noblecourt, "Pots anthropomorphes et recettes magico-médicales dans l'Égypte ancienne," *RdE* 9 (1952): 49-67; H. Rand, "Figure-Vases in Ancient Egypt and Hebrew midwives" *Israel Exploration Journal* 20.3/4 (1970): 209-212.

²⁴ E. Brunner-Traut, "Das Gravidenflasche – Das Salben des Mutterleibes," in *Archäologie und Altes Testament: Festschrift für Kurt Galling zum 8. Jan. 1970*, ed. A. Kuschke and E. Kutsch (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1970), 35-48.

²⁵ E. Brunner-Traut, "Das Muttermilchkrügel: Ammen mit Stillumhang und Mondamulett," *Die Welt des Orients* 5.2 (1970): 145-164.

²⁶ Ex: H. Kees, *Totenglauben und Jenseitsvorstellungen der alten Ägypter* (Leipzig, J.C. Hinrichs, 1926), 299-300; C. Desroches Noblecourt, "'Concubines du Mort' et mères de famille au Moyen Empire. À propos d'une supplique pour une naissance," *BIFAO* 53 (1953): 7-47.

²⁷ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 198-234.

²⁸ L. Giddy, *Kom Rabi 'a: The New Kingdom and Post-New Kingdom Objects*, The Survey of Memphis 2 (London: EES, 1999), 28-42; M. Trapani, "Statuette femminili al mae di Torino," *Rivista degli studi orientali* 85.1-4 (2012): pp. 533-551; Ibid., "Una particolare categoria di reperti al MAE di Torino: le 'statuette della fertilità'," in *Antichità egizie e Italia Prospettive di ricerca e indagini sul campo* (Antichistica 6 Studi orientali 2), ed. E. Ciampini and P. Zanolletto (Venezia: Edizioni Ca' Foscari, 2014), 69-75; Ibid., "A Deposit of Female Figurines from Gebelein (Schiaparelli's Campaign in 1910)," in *Company of Images*, 457-477.

²⁹ A. Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs. A Study of Wooden Models and Related Material," (PhD. Diss., University of Liverpool, 1989), 305-68; T. Dothan, "Female figurines from the Deir el-Balah settlement and cemetery," in *"I will speak the riddles of ancient times": archaeological and historical studies in honor of Amihaj Mazar on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday*, v.1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 49-160; Stevens, *Private religion*, 85-92; E. Waraska, *Female figurines from the Mut*

type of female figurine,³⁰ so this work includes them in a new typology. In addition, certain types that, while discussed in Pinch's work, were not considered in her figurine typology appear to be female figurines,³¹ so have been included in the new figurine typology. Waraska has considered female figurines to be subject to ritual destruction, and not necessarily all fertility objects.³²

Pinch,³³ Teeter,³⁴ and Del Vesco³⁵ have carried out the most recent and in-depth analyses on the figurines and bed models. While they seem closely related to nude female figurines, bed models appear to have had additional meaning as independent objects.³⁶ Woman-on-bed figurines appear to have continued well past the New Kingdom, with some Late Period exemplars from sites such as Naucratis³⁷ and the Penn Museum figurines from Memphis dating to the Graeco-Roman period.³⁸

1.1.4 Non-figural Devices

Scholars have proposed several different objects as relating to fertility and birth. The *psṣ-kf* device and *ntrwj*-blades, both associated with the funerary 'Opening of the Mouth'

Precinct: Context and ritual function. (OBO 240; Fribourg, Switzerland: Academic Press Fribourg, 2009); E. Teeter, *Baked clay figurines and votive beds from Medinet Habu*, (OIP 133; Chicago: Oriental Institute, 2010), 23-71; J. Backhouse, "Female figurines from Deir el-Medina: a review of evidence for their iconography and function," *Current research in Egyptology* 13 (2013): 22-40.

³⁰ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 71-103; R.A.D. Hernández, "'Paddle Dolls' - Ritual Figurines of Fertility," in *Company of Images*, 125-132.

³¹Ex: J. Jacquet, *Karnak-Nord IX* (FIFAO 44; Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 2001), 62, fig. 54; F. Doyen, "Due trait élémentaire à la perception vitale: quelques figurines féminines de la ville pharaonique de Saï," *CRIPPEL* 30 (2013-2015): 133-157; A. Stevens, "Female figurines and folk culture at Amara West," in *Nubia in the New Kingdom: lived experience, pharaonic control, and indigenous traditions*, edited by N. Spencer et al. (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 407-427.

³² Waraska, *Female Figurines*, esp. 126-61.

³³ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, pp. 197-227.

³⁴ Teeter, *Baked clay figurines and votive beds*.

³⁵ P. Del Vesco, "A votive bed fragment in the Egyptian Museum of Florence (Italy)." *Egitto e Vicino Oriente* 32 (2009): 31-37; Ibid., *Letti votivi e culti domestici. Tracce archeologiche di credenze religiose nell'Egitto del terzo periodo intermedio* (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2010).

³⁶ Stevens, *Private religion*, 88-89.

³⁷ W.M.F. Petrie, *Naucratis I* (London: Trübner, 1886), 40-1, pl. 19.

³⁸ C. Rose, "Childbirth magic: deciphering bed figurines from ancient Egypt," *Expedition* 58/3 (2016): 38-45.

ceremony, have been subject to various interpretations to how they exactly functioned,³⁹ with Roth proposing that they were objects associated with childbirth whose meaning transferred to rebirth.⁴⁰ Another object considered linked with fertility are cowrie-shells,⁴¹ both actual ones and copies made in faience, semi-precious stones, or metal. There is currently some debate about whether cylindrical amulets from the Middle Kingdom are related to the later Third Intermediate Period amulet-cases tied around the necks of children.⁴² Finally, previous scholarship had pondered the meaning of the Isis-knot and whether it had any connection to the protection of pregnant women from miscarriage.⁴³ The main difficulty in discussing such amulets is the general lack of context for many of these objects.

³⁹ E. Otto, *Das ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual* (ÄA 3; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1960); R. van Walsem, "The *Psš-kf*: An investigation of an ancient Egyptian funerary instrument," *OMRO* 59 (1978): 193–249; L.B. Fanfoni, "Intorno uno strumento funerario arcaico: il *psš-kf*," *Studi Classici e Orientali* 28 (1978): 133–138; T. Bardinot, *Dents et mâchoires dans les représentations religieuses et la pratique médicale de l'Égypte ancienne* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1990), Ch. 8.

⁴⁰ A.M. Roth, "The *psš-kf* and the 'Opening of the Mouth' ceremony: a ritual of birth and rebirth," *JEA* 78 (1992): 113–147; Ibid., "Fingers, stars, and the 'Opening of the Mouth': The nature and function of the *ntrwi*-blades," *JEA* 79 (1993): 57–79.

⁴¹ E. D'Amicone, "Cowrie-shells and pearl-oysters: two iconographic repertoires of Middle Kingdom gold-work," *BSEG* 9-10 (1984-5): 63–70; L. Kovács, *Vulvae, eyes, snake heads: archaeological finds of cowrie amulets* (BAR 1846; Oxford, UK: Archaeopress, 2008); A. Golani, "Cowrie shells and their imitations as ornamental amulets in Egypt and the Near East," *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean* 23:2 (2014): 71–83; M. Stoof, *Kauroide und kauroidähnliche Siegelamulette im alten Ägypten*. (Schriften zur Ägyptologie 1. Hamburg: Dr. Kovač, 2015).

⁴² J. Leclant, "A propos des etuis porte-amulettes Egyptiens et Puniques," in *Oriental Studies Presented to Benedikt S. J. Isserlin by Friends and Colleagues on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday 25 February 1976*, ed. R. Y. Ebied and M. J. L. Young (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 102–107; C. Andrews, *Jewellery I: From the earliest times to the Seventeenth Dynasty* (London: British Museum Publications, 1981), 92; J.J. and R. Janssen, "A Cylindrical amulet case: recent investigations," in: *Gegengabe: Festschrift für Emma Brunner-Traut*, ed. I. Gamer-Wallert and W. Helck (Tübingen: Attempto, 1992), 157–165; S. Quirke, "Cylindrical pendant," in *Ancient Egypt transformed*, 204–205, Cat. 138.

⁴³ H. Bonnet, *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1952), 332; W. Westendorf, "Beiträge aus und zu den medizinischen Texten. I. Mafdet, die Herrin des Lebenshauses, und Seth, groß an Lebenskraft, II. Das Isisblut-Symbol," *ZÄS* 92 (1966): 128–154; Ibid., "Isis Knoten." *LÄ* III (1980): 204; R.O. Faulkner, "The Pregnancy of Isis," *JEA* 54 (1968): 40–44; R. Hannig, "Die Schwangerschaft der Isis," in *Festschrift Jürgen zum 70. Geburtstag am 19. Februar 1990*, ed. B. Schmitz and A. Eggebrecht (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1990), 91–95; W. Wendrich, "Entangled, connected, or protection? The power of knots and knotting in ancient Egypt," in *Through a glass darkly: magic, dreams, and prophecy in ancient Egypt*, ed. K. Szpakowska (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2006), 243–69.

1.1.5 Texts

The texts covered under this study include medical-magical texts, necropolis journals and letters from Deir el-Medina, and the birth story from Papyrus Westcar. The medical-magical texts covered various fertility and pregnancy-related issues, ranging from fertility tests to post-birth survival. From comparison with material culture, certain elements from the Papyrus Westcar birth legend⁴⁴ can be linked with human practices. The Deir el-Medina journals and letters mentioned pregnancies and births in some of the entries, providing information on customs surrounding birth and materials purchased in preparation.

A substantial portion of the available magical texts contained at least a few spells concerning gynecological issues,⁴⁵ including some pregnancy-related concerns. In general, the texts diagnosed feminine medical issues in ways similar to other ailments in medical and magical texts, even following the same spell formulae. Women's treatments, however, differed from the other magical rites in spell corpora such as the Berlin Papyrus 3027⁴⁶ and the Leiden texts.⁴⁷ The common causes attributed to fertility-related problems are natural environment, demons and gods, the dead, and other malevolent forces.⁴⁸ While a few medical texts date to the Middle Kingdom, the majority of medical literature to this point derives from the New Kingdom, particularly the

⁴⁴ W.K. Simpson, *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, and Poetry*. William Kelly Simpson (ed.) (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), 13-24; M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, vol.1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 215-221; A.M. Blackman, *The story of King Kheops and the magicians; transcribed from Papyrus Westcar (Perlin Papyrus 3033)* (Reading, U.K.: J.V. Books, 1988); R.B. Parkinson, *The Tale of Sinuhe and other ancient Egyptian poems, 1940-1640 BC* (New York: Clarendon Press, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 102-127; Dominica Bagnato, *The Westcar Papyrus: a transliteration, translation, and language analysis* (Wien: Edition Atelier, 2006).

⁴⁵ G. Pinch, *Magic in ancient Egypt* (revised ed., Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 128.

⁴⁶ Adolf Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mütter und Kind: Berlin 3027* (Berlin: Verlag der königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1901); Naoko Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind: Papyrus Berlin 3027* (Berlin: Achet Verlag, 2003).

⁴⁷ J.F. Borghouts, *The magical texts of Papyrus Leiden I 348* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971).

⁴⁸ Pinch, *Magic in ancient Egypt*, 130.

18th Dynasty. There are also some Letters to the Dead, dating from the late 3rd to early 2nd Millenniums, which asked the deceased for a successful pregnancy and childbirth.⁴⁹

One of the earliest medical-magical texts, the Kahun Papyrus,⁵⁰ dating to the 12th Dynasty, has a long section discussing various feminine medical issues, including a pregnancy test and spells pertaining to childbirth. One such spell treated pregnancy-related pain,⁵¹ while another handled bleeding, either resulting from the placenta after birth or a uterine disease.⁵² Of similar date, Papyrus Ramesseum III has a long section of spells and remedies for a mother and child, while the larger fragment of Papyrus Ramesseum IV, dating to the 12th Dynasty, has spells for protecting a newborn, a prognosis of infant viability, and destroyed remnants of a spell about pregnancy and birth.⁵³ The spells from the former contained one for getting a child to breastfeed and curing child illnesses, while the latter included incantations for detaching a child from the womb during childbirth.

Probably the most relevant such text for the purpose of this dissertation is the 18th Dynasty papyrus Berlin 3027,⁵⁴ titled “Magical Spells for Mother and Child,” which, as the title suggests, pertain to magic/medical treatment for pregnancy, childbirth, and continued health of the child. While the date of the papyrus itself dates to the 18th Dynasty, the paleography and perhaps structure of the spells may date to earlier. While the spells from the first half pertained to

⁴⁹ A.H. Gardiner and K. Sethe, *Egyptian Letters to the Dead* (London: EES, 1928); E. Wente, *Letters from ancient Egypt* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 213; H. El-Leithy, “Letter to the dead in ancient and modern Egypt,” in *Egyptology at the dawn of the twenty-first century: Proceedings of the eighth International Congress of Egyptologists, Cairo, 2000*, V.1, ed. Zahi Hawass (Cairo; New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2003), 306.

⁵⁰ Thierry Bardinnet, *Les papyrus médicaux de l’Égypte pharaonique* (Paris : Fayard, 1995), 437-443.

⁵¹ W. Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin* (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 1999), 414 (Kah 9).

⁵² Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin*, 416-417 (Kah 17).

⁵³ Bardinnet, *Les papyrus médicaux de l’Égypte pharaonique*, 466-470, 471-472.

⁵⁴ Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mütter und Kind*; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*.

the child-hood illnesses *nšw* and *tmyt*, the second book, comprising 15 pages, covered birth and illnesses of infants.

The Ebers papyrus,⁵⁵ a 18th Dynasty text probably from the archive of Ramses II in the Ramesseum,⁵⁶ likewise had gynecological sections, including spells relating to childbirth and milk production, as well as two prognoses about the viability of a newborn child. Papyrus Berlin 3038, dating to the 19th Dynasty, had a gynecological section which contained seven prognoses (#193-199) for pregnancy, which is parallel to that of Papyrus Carlsberg VIII, which dates to the 19th-20th Dynasties.⁵⁷ Another relevant text is Papyrus BM 10059,⁵⁸ dating to the end of the 18th Dynasty. Among the texts with magical formulas is a section of spells from BM 10059 for preventing bleeding during pregnancy that could lead to miscarriage. The papyrus linked this potential threat to the attempts of Seth to terminate Horus while the latter was still in the womb.

The Deir el-Medina texts provided hints of who participated in birth rituals and some of the equipment that would be purchased for the occasion of birth.⁵⁹ Several of the work absences listed in the necropolis journals mentioned that a worker would miss work, at least occasionally, due to his wife or daughter giving birth. Some ostraca letters from the town discussed equipment purchases that women and even occasionally men would make prior to childbirth. As will be seen below, people of the period under study did not appear to have demarcated birth rituals as exclusively belonging to a “female domain.”

⁵⁵ Bordinet, *Les papyrus médicaux de l'Égypte pharaonique*, 251-373 and 443-446.

⁵⁶ W. Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin*, 22.

⁵⁷ Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin*, 44, 48.

⁵⁸ Bordinet, *Les papyrus médicaux de l'Égypte pharaonique*, 483-492.

⁵⁹ J. Janssen, "Absence from work by the necropolis workmen of Thebes," *SAK* 8 (1980): 127-152; Ibid., "Gift giving in ancient Egypt as an economic feature," *JEA* 68 (1982): 253-258; T.G. Wilfong, "Menstrual synchrony and the 'Place of Women' in ancient Egypt (OIM 13512)," in *Gold of Praise. Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honor of Edward F. Wente*, ed. E. Teeter and J. A. Larson (SAOC 58; Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1999), 419-434; Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 172-181.

Papyrus Westcar, conventionally dated to the Second Intermediate Period, contains the most vivid description of childbirth available from Egyptian texts. While certain elements, such as the one-cubit size of each of the three infants, were typical of divinity, most of the aspects of the births can be tied with the material culture on childbirth. The text indicated the role of the father and midwives, as well as mentioned the cutting of the umbilical cord.

1.1.6 Apotropaia

Typical of the Late Middle Kingdom is a set of iconography, involving protective deities and demons who are likely associated with the sun, that occurs on a number of different types of items. The materials most connected with birth and protection of the woman and child are the magic wands, baby-feeding cups, and faience animal figurines.

After some excavation reports noted the presence of ivory magic wands,⁶⁰ Altenmüller published the first comprehensive overview of the objects,⁶¹ creating typologies for the most common images carved in relief. Subsequent works published new examples⁶² or examined aspects of the apotropaic iconography.⁶³ Most recently, Quirke had examined the currently

⁶⁰ W. Rylands, "Egyptian engraved ivory in the British Museum (No. 18175)," *PSBA* 10 (1888): 570; F. Legge, "The carved slates from Hierakonpolis and elsewhere," *PSBA* 22 (1900): 125-139; Ibid., "The magic ivories of the Middle Empire," *PSBA* 27 (1905): 130-152, 297-303; Ibid. *PSBA* 28 (1906): 159-70; M. Murray, "The astrological character of the Egyptian magical wands," *PSBA* 28 (1906): 33-43; G. Steindorff, "Magical knives in the Middle Kingdom," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 9 (1946): 41-51 and 106-107.

⁶¹ H. Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia und die Götter Mittelägyptens: eine typologische und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung der sogenannten „Zaubermesser“ des Mittleren Reichs* (Munich: Ludwig Maximilian Universität, 1965).

⁶² H. Altenmüller, "Totenglauben und Magie," in *La magia ai tempi dei faraoni: atti, convegno internazionale di studi, Milano, 29-31 ottobre 1985*, ed. A. Roccati and A. Siliotti (Verona, 1987), 131-146; Ibid., "Ein Zaubermesser des Mittleren Reiches," *SAK* 13 (1986): 1-27; M. Perraud, "Apuis-tête à inscription magique et apotropaia," *BIFAO* 102 (2002): 309-326; P. Hubai, "Der zerbrochene Zauberstab vom Nutzen der Magie oder das Apotropaion zu Budapest," *SAK* 37 (2008): 169-198; Ibid., "Ein neues Apotropaion: eine hermeneutische Fragestellung," *GM* 222 (2009): 27-40; É. Liptay, "Repelling Demons - Protecting Newborns: Egyptian Magic Wand," *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* 102-103 (2005): 150-151, 264-266.

⁶³ Ex: E. Lange, "Gebändigte Macht: Tiere in der altägyptischen Magie," In *Ägypten: ein Tempel der Tiere: Begleitbuch zur gleichnamigen Ausstellung im Zoologischen Garten Berlin*, ed. V. Vaelske et al. (Berlin:

known wands, comparing their imagery to those on other objects and creating a new dating for these devices.⁶⁴

From both tomb and domestic contexts, spouted cups, often referred to as feeding cups, mostly don't have decoration.⁶⁵ One fragmentary cup and a complete faience example show the same imagery as the wands.⁶⁶ However, there is uncertainty about whether these truly were feeding cups.⁶⁷

Another category using themes similar to those on the wands are faience figurines, which predominantly depicted various animals. Recent scholarly attention has focused on such figurines both in terms of overall characteristics⁶⁸ and specific creatures represented.⁶⁹

Achet, 2006), 100-103; J. Roberson, "The early history of 'New Kingdom' netherworld iconography: a late Middle Kingdom apotropaic wand reconsidered," in *Archaism and innovation: studies in the culture of Middle Kingdom Egypt*, ed. D. Silverman, W.K. Simpson, and J. Wegner (New Haven; Philadelphia, 2009), 427-445; É. Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom apotropaia to Netherworld Books," in *From Illahun to Djeme: papers presented in honour of Ulrich Luft*, ed. E. Bechtold et al. (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2011), 149-55; H. Altenmüller, "Zu den Feindbildern auf den Zauberstäben des Mittleren Reiches und der Zweiten Zwischenzeit," *Études et Travaux* 30 (2017): 73-94; Z. Bennett, "Conceptions of demons in the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts," in *Company of Images*, 15-34.

⁶⁴ S. Quirke, *Birth Tusks: The Armoury of Health in Context – Egypt 1800 BC* (London: Golden House Publications, 2016).

⁶⁵ Ex: Petrie, *Kahun*, 45, pl. xiii-xiv; C. Von Pilgrim, *Untersuchungen in der Stadt des Mittleren Reiches und der Zweiten Zwischenzeit* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1996), 132, 320-1.

⁶⁶ Ex: J. Bourriau, *Umm el-Ga'ab*, 68-69, no. 125; S. Quirke, "Baby feeding cup," in *Ancient Egypt Transformed*, 202, Cat. 133.

⁶⁷ A. Marshall, "The nurture of children in ancient Egypt," *GM* 247 (2015): 51-61.

⁶⁸ H.G. Fischer, "The ancient Egyptian Attitude towards the Monstrous," in *Monsters and Demons in the ancient and medieval Worlds: Papers presented in Honor of Edith Porada*, ed. A.E. Farkas et al. (Mainz on Rhine: P. von Zabern, 1987), 13-26; G. Miniaci, "The Collapse of Faience figurine Production at the End of the Middle Kingdom: Reading the History of an Epoch between Postmodernism and Grand Narrative," *JEH* 7 (2014): 109-142; Ibid., "Unbroken Stories: Middle Kingdom Faience Figurines in their archaeological Context," in *Company of Images* (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 235-84; S. Quirke, "Figuring Migrations: severing and joining Power Lines," in *Company of Images*, 361-75.

⁶⁹ K. Braulińska, "Middle Kingdom Dog Figurines. General Remarks," in *Company of Images*, 35-70; L. Sabbahy, "The Middle Bronze Egyptian Griffon: whence and Whither?" in *Company of Images*, 395-42.

1.1.7 Place of Birth

Material remains concerning the place where women may have given birth are birth bricks, New Kingdom royal birth scenes, ostraca “birth arbor” scenes, and the *lit clos* at Deir el-Medina.

The only known physical example of a birth brick comes from Wegner’s excavation in South Abydos,⁷⁰ bearing painted imagery very similar to those on apotropaia. Scholarship has discussed the use of birth bricks,⁷¹ sometimes mentioned in texts, while other works examined magical funerary bricks,⁷² which may be related to birth ones. Probably associated with birth bricks are Late Middle Kingdom rectangular rod segments,⁷³ carved with similar apotropaic imagery. There is some debate whether stools could also have served as birthing equipment.⁷⁴

The New Kingdom royal birth scenes, depicted on the mortuary temples of Hatshepsut and Amenhotep III, contain elements that may inform on regular birth practices.⁷⁵ Some concepts

⁷⁰ J. Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick from South Abydos: new evidence on childbirth and birth magic in the Middle Kingdom,” in *Archaism and innovation: studies in the culture of Middle Kingdom Egypt*, ed. D. Silverman et al. (New Haven; Philadelphia, 2009), 447-496.

⁷¹ Ex: P. Galpaz-Feller, “Pregnancy and birth in the Bible and ancient Egypt (comparative study),” *Biblische Notizen* 102 (2000): 42-53; K. McGeough, “Birth bricks, potters’ wheels, and Exodus 1, 16,” *Biblica* 87.3 (2006): 305-318.

⁷² D. Silverman, “Magical bricks of Hunuro,” in *Studies in honor of William Kelly Simpson*, ed. W.K. Simpson et al. (Boston: MFA, 1996), 725-741; A.M. Roth and C. Roehrig, “Magical bricks and the bricks of birth,” *JEA* 88 (2002): 121-39.

⁷³ Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 115-6; F. Friedman, “Section of magic Rod,” in *Gifts of the Nile: ancient Egyptian faience*, ed. F. Friedman et al. (London; New York: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 207, Cat. 68; Gnirs, “Nipferdstosszähne,” 128-30; Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 473-4; S. Quirke, “Apotropaic rod,” in *Ancient Egypt transformed*, 201-202, Cat. 132; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 414-6.

⁷⁴ Ex: A.R. Schulman, “A birth scene (?) from Memphis,” *JARCE* 22 (1985): 97-103; B. Watterson, *Women in ancient Egypt* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1991), 89-90; Strouhal, *Life of the Ancient Egyptians*, 17; Feucht, “Das Weg in der Leben,” 47-8 and n.86.

⁷⁵ F. Weindler, *Geburts- und Wochenbetts-darstellungen auf altägyptischen Tempelreliefs: Ein Beitrag zur prähistorischen Urgeburtschilfe an der Hand von 16 Originalaufnahmen in Lichtdruck und 12 Abbildungen im Text* (München: C. I. Becksche Verlagsbuchhandlung Oskar Beck, 1915); M. Pillet, “Les scènes de naissance et de circoncision dans le temple nord-est de Mout, à Karnak,” *ASAÉ* 52.1 (1952): 77-104; H. Brunner, *Die Geburt des Gottkönigs: Studien zur Überlieferung eines altägyptischen Mythos* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1964); C. Graindorge, “La naissance divine de la reine Hatshepsout,” *Dossiers d’Archéologie* 187 (1993): 26-33.

from these appear to have derived from a birth shrine mentioned in the annals of Amenemhet II and other such shrines depicted in Old Kingdom tomb chapels.⁷⁶

Important for the similarity of its imagery to that on other possibly birth-related objects, the painted ostraca scenes of “birth arbors” depict a woman on a bed or stool, surrounded by convolvulus leaves, often with a child. Previous scholarship has examined these scenes in detail,⁷⁷ as well as reviewed the symbolism of certain motifs within these representations.⁷⁸

The *lit clos* structures in houses at Deir el-Medina, consisting of a raised feature with a staircase three or five steps high to reach it, has been the subject of much debate over its function. A few have preserved painted decoration, including Bes-figures and what appears to be a scene like the “birth arbor” ostraca. The imagery appears related to that of wall paintings from some houses in Amarna.⁷⁹ Theories range from these structures serving as sleeping beds,⁸⁰ a female

⁷⁶ H. Altenmüller, “Geburtsschrein und Geburthaus,” in *Studies in honor of William Kelly Simpson*, ed. P. Der Manuelian, (Boston: MFA, 1996), 27-37.

⁷⁷ J. Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue des Ostraca Figurés de Deir el-Médineh* (DFIFAO Tome II, fasc. 2-4 ; Cairo: Impr. de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 1937-1959), Scene Type N; E. Brunner-Traut, “Die Wochenlaube” *MIO* 3 (1955): 11-30; Weiss, *Religious Practice*, 158-161.

⁷⁸ Ex: R.L. Miller, “Was Convolvulus Erotic?” in *Beyond the Horizon: Studies in Egyptian Art, Archaeology, and History in Honour of Barry J. Kemp*, Vol. I, ed. Salima Ikram and Aidan Dodson (Cairo: Supreme Council of Antiquities, 2009), 247-262.

⁷⁹ B. Kemp, “Wall Paintings from the Workmen's Village at El-Amarna,” *JEA* 65 (1979): 47-53.

⁸⁰ J. Romano, *Daily life of the ancient Egyptians* (Pittsburgh: Carnegie Museum of Natural History, 1990), 27; L. Meskell, *Archaeologies of Social Life* (Oxford and Massachusetts, 1999), 100.

space,⁸¹ birthing beds,⁸² post-birth purification areas,⁸³ altars,⁸⁴ chapels,⁸⁵ or multi-functional sacred spaces.⁸⁶

1.2 Methodology

The temporal focus of this work consists of the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom, with the objective of creating an integrative model of birth practices from the material culture and iconography in connection with textual sources. Since some of the objects and motifs had precedents in the Predynastic and Old Kingdom, this work includes discussion of those earlier parallels. Any material mentioned that dates later than the New Kingdom would be continuations of material from the periods under discussion.

The birth and fertility iconography of the Middle Kingdom through New Kingdom can be understood as addressing four stages in the birth process: fertility, pregnancy, birth, and post-birth survival (Figure 1). For this work, fertility means pertaining to the ability to produce progeny. In contrast, birth material more specifically focused on the delivery of young from the mother. The first chapters concern divine (Chapter 2) and human (Chapter 3) models of fertility. Chapter 4 concerns amulets and devices perhaps related to fecundity, which tended to be associated with the

⁸¹ Meskell, *Archaeologies of Social Life*, 100; Meskell, *Private life*, 111, 125.

⁸² K.A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant. The Life and Times of Ramesses II, King of Egypt* (Warminster, 1982), 187; N. Strudwick and H. Strudwick, *Thebes in Egypt. A Guide to the Tombs and Temples of Ancient Luxor* (London, 1999), 178.

⁸³ Kemp, "Wall paintings," 53; Friedman, "Aspects of domestic life," 102; Meskell, *Archaeologies of Social Life*, 100.

⁸⁴ D. Arnold, *Lexikon der ägyptischen Baukunst* (Düsseldorf, 2000), 100; McDowell 2001, 11; Stevens, "Material evidence," 149; A. Koltsida, "Birth bed, sitting place, erotic corner or domestic altar? A study of the so-called "elevated bed" in Deir el-Medina houses," *SAK* 35 (2006): 165-174; N. Kleinke, *Female spaces: Untersuchungen zu Gener und Archäologie im pharaonischen Ägypten* (Göttingen: Seminar für Ägyptologie und Koptologie Universität Göttingen, 2007); Lesko, "Household and domestic religion," 197-209; R. Ritner, "Household religion in ancient Egypt," in *Household and family religion in antiquity*, 171-196.

⁸⁵ M. Bierbrier, *The tomb-builders of the pharaohs* (Cairo, Egypt: American University of Cairo Press, 1982), 69; Robins, "Women and children in peril," 31.

⁸⁶ Friedman, "Aspects of domestic life," 111, 117.

human models of fertility. Various texts concerned matters ranging from fertility through birth and post-birth survival, so Chapter 5 transitions the discussion from fertility to birth-specific materials. These items specializing in childbirth include apotropaia (Chapter 6) and objects and imagery concerning the birthplace (Chapter 7).

To provide a framework for the bulk of the material under study, the dissertation will review the relevant translations of magical and medical texts from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom, various journals and letters from Deir el-Medina, and the description of regal birth from the Westcar Papyrus.⁸⁷ Analysis links certain elements of the birth mentioned in the tale to specific artifacts such as birth bricks and the possible loosening of knots. This review will concentrate on the religious nature of the prescriptions in the magical-medical texts, as well as shifts and continuations from the medical and magical treatments in Middle Kingdom texts to those of the New Kingdom. There will also be consideration of any mention of birth objects in these texts. Examination of texts from Deir el-Medina will focus on what they reveal about who was present for childbirth and what material they purchased for the event.

⁸⁷ R.B. Parkinson, *The Tale of Sinuhe and other ancient Egyptian poems, 1940-1640 BC* (New York: Clarendon Press, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 102-127.

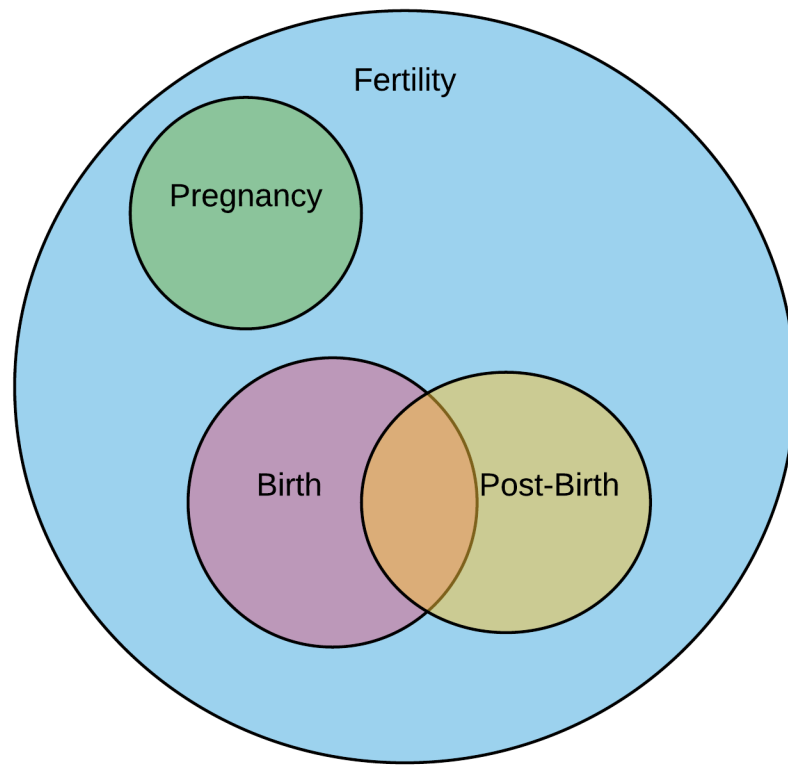


Figure 1 – Relationship between fertility stages in Egyptian material culture.

The chapters discussing the material culture of fertility and birth will be limited to those with context from excavations. Some of the objects under discussion will include female figurines, birth bricks, various amulets such as cows, frogs, wallet beads, cowrie shells, objects depicting birth deities, amulet cases, bed models, wall paintings, and ostraca. Much of these chapters focus on the context of these objects archaeologically, as well as in texts and iconography. Since some of these objects, such as birth wands and female fertility figurines, were found in variety of contexts, this examination would aid in properly interpreting their function. This analysis would establish the date range of certain objects and their specific contexts. For certain objects, such as stools, this consideration of context would determine whether they could have been used for fertility and/or birth rituals.

There is a notable regionalism in the preservation of evidence for the material in this study. Given the general lack of child burials in many cemeteries, such regionalism would skew the evidence from those child burials in houses. Likewise, the paucity of material from Lower Egypt makes it difficult to determine whether the iconography of the Middle Kingdom through New Kingdom was characteristic of all of Egypt or of Middle through Upper Egypt. For the Middle Kingdom, domestic objects are concentrated at Lahun. Similar material from burials, as well as occasional items from other contemporary domestic sites, such as the Abydos birth brick, establish a larger diffusion of these object types. In contrast to the wide spread of material from the Middle Kingdom, evidence from the New Kingdom, such as the Wochenlaube, *lit clos*, and pebble figures, was concentrated in Thebes. Domestic objects during this period largely derived from Deir el-Medina and Amarna, to the point of the Theban region seemingly serving as a cultural epicenter of birth and fertility iconography. However, the spread of objects bearing similar motifs suggest that the imagery was not limited to Thebes.

Chapter 8 concludes with comparison of the patterns seen in the birth and fertility material with wider religious contexts. One such framework is the interplay between social norms and individual demonstrations of piety, wherein birth and fertility practices featured gradual developments towards greater expression of connection to the divine similar to other religious traditions, though it was not an exclusively lineal expansion. Another concept is the division of material into themes of discontinuity, continuity, and the development of previous traditions. The corpus demonstrated noticeable continuity, with innovations and new object types based on principals found in earlier material.

Chapter 2: Harnessing the Divine

2.1 Introduction

The main deities concerning childbirth were Hathor, frog-goddess Heqet, Aha/Bes, and Ipet/Taweret. While Hathor had been consistently worshipped throughout Egyptian history, it was not the case with the other deities. For example, there is currently a debate whether earlier iconographic forms of frogs truly represented Heqet or a different deity. The first objects relating to Aha/Bes and Ipet/Taweret began around the Late Old Kingdom, started to become prevalent in the Middle Kingdom, and rose to further prominence in the New Kingdom. These two deities operated under different names in the Middle Kingdom than in the New Kingdom. The main deities, seen in figurines and ivory birth wands,⁸⁸ tended to hold cobras or cobra-shaped staves, the latter occurring in archaeological contexts. These cobra wands may also have had associations with birth.

A notable site for both the material in this chapter and subsequent chapters is the Temple of Obelisks of Byblos,⁸⁹ a seaport city on the Lebanese coast with longstanding relations with Egypt during the third and second millennia. Specifically, the pro-cella included a large deposit of faience material, including figurines of Aha/Bes and Ipet/Taweret, apotropaic beings, cubic rods, dwarves, and nude females. This deposit, from Phases 5-6 of the temple, appears to date to the late Middle Kingdom,⁹⁰ based in part on an obelisk with the name of prince Abi-

⁸⁸ See § 6.2.

⁸⁹ M. Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, (Études et documents d'archéologie 1, 3. Paris: P. Geuthner, 1937-1939).

⁹⁰ G. Miniaci, "Deposit f (Nos. 15121-15567) in the Obelisk Temple at Byblos: Artifact mobility in the Middle Bronze Age I-II (1850-1650B) between Egypt and the Levant," *Agypten und Levante* 28 (2018): 382-6.

Shemu, likely a contemporary of Amenemhat III.⁹¹ Other objects from the pro-cella, such as a bag-shaped jar,⁹² funnel-shaped bowl with in-turned rim,⁹³ and a steatite seal representing a seated human wearing a long garment,⁹⁴ are likewise consistent with this date. Initially, previous scholars had presumed that the faience material was locally produced, based on the larger range of motifs and white faience color.⁹⁵ However, Miniaci has noted that the moister climate in Byblos would strip away the original glaze, rather than white faience being a local variation, and that the Byblos corpus had close parallels with Egypt, including the same percentage of active versus passive poses.⁹⁶ Thus, the material was likely imported from Egypt.

The Temple of Obelisks appears to have served as a mortuary shrine structured akin to the later *bêt bâmôt* ('the High places') in Israel,⁹⁷ i.e. the open-air cult installations set on a natural hilltop or on an artificial raised platform, often furnished with standing stones and sacrificial altars.⁹⁸ Indeed, while there are no associated burials like a mortuary temple, some of the obelisks were inscribed for deceased individuals (*mꜥz-hrw*).⁹⁹ Overall, the deposit in Byblos is

⁹¹ P. Montet, *Byblos et l'Égypte: 1921-1924* (Paris, Paul Geuthner, 1928), 174f. and W. F. Albright, "The Eighteen-Century princes of Byblos and the chronology of Middle Bronze," *BASOR* 176 (1964): 39, 43. Contra K. Kopetzky, "Some remarks on the relations between Egypt and the Levant during the late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period," in *The World of Middle Kingdom Egypt (2000-1550 BC): Contributions on archaeology, art, religion, and written sources*, Vol. II, ed. G. Miniaci and W. Grajetzki (London: Golden House Publications, 2016), 143-59.

⁹² Miniaci, "Deposit f," 384. Excavators found jars were produced in Egypt from around the time of Amenemhat III to the mid-13th Dynasty: B. Bader et al., "An Egyptian jar from Sidon in its Egyptian context; some fresh evidence," *AHL* 29 (2009): 81; R. Schiestl and A. Seiler, *Handbook of pottery of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom. Vol. I: The corpus volume* (CCEM 31; DGÖAW 72; Vienna, 2012), 592.

⁹³ Miniaci, "Deposit f," 385.

⁹⁴ Dunand, *Fouilles des Byblos* II, vol. I, pl. 95; Vol. II, 767. It is typical of late Middle Kingdom seal production: G. T. Martin, *Egyptian Administrative and Private-Name Seals Principally of the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1971), no. 329.

⁹⁵ Dunand, *Fouilles des Byblos* II, vol. II, 953; D. P. Hansen, "Some remarks on the chronology of objects from Byblos," *AJA* 73/3 (1969): 282; J. Aruz, et al., *Beyond Babylon: art, trade, and diplomacy in the Second Millennium B.C.*, (New Haven-London-New York, 2008), 42.

⁹⁶ Miniaci, "Deposit f," 392-8.

⁹⁷ W.F. Albright, "The High Place in Ancient Palestine," *Vetus Testamentus Sup* 4 (1957): 242-258.

⁹⁸ B.A. Nakhai, "What's a Bamah? How Sacred Space Functioned in Ancient Israel," *BAR* 20/3 (1994): 18-29; L.S. Fried, "The High Places (*bāmôt*) and the Reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah: An Archaeological Investigation," *JAOS* 122.3 (2002): 437-465.

⁹⁹ Miniaci, "Deposit f," 391.

consistent with finds of late Middle Kingdom faience objects in other sites, which were primarily funerary in Egypt and in temples in peripheral areas.¹⁰⁰

2.2 Aha/Bes

Representations of the dwarf-bodied lion-headed deity occurred in the Late Old Kingdom.¹⁰¹ During the Middle Kingdom, images of male and a few female lion-headed deities occurred most commonly in carved ivory tusks, as well as amulets and several figurines. In the New Kingdom, the iconography of the god, became more standardized and more common.

During the Middle Kingdom, the deity had various names. In two ivory tusks, he is named ꜥḥꜣ, “The fighter.”¹⁰² The appellation also occurred in the name of certain Hermopolitan nomarchs, such as Ahanacht and Ahahotep.¹⁰³ Likewise, some nomarchs had simply the nickname Iha.¹⁰⁴ One spell from the Pyramid Texts may be another mention of this god.¹⁰⁵ Aha/Bes and his female counterpart, Ahat, were also depicted together with certain motifs referring to the king’s ideology (‘the smiting of the enemy’).¹⁰⁶ The connection of this deity with the protection of the sun god already occurred in texts from the Middle Kingdom. The Book of Two Ways referred to him as “Aha, he protects him in the interior of his sanctuary.”¹⁰⁷ In this text, the god’s fierceness presented potential harm to the deceased, so the line, “N. has come from the Great Valley. The knife of Aha was taken away for him by him.”¹⁰⁸ The god Aha was “a

¹⁰⁰ Miniaci, "Deposit f," 390-1. For more on the context of faience figurines, see below, § 6.5.2.

¹⁰¹ Ex: W.A. Ward, "The Origin of Egyptian Design-Amulets ('Button Seals')," *JEA* 56 (1970): 65-80, see fig. 76b-c ("pyramid" type) and dating this type to the 6th Dynasty on p.80; Romano, "Bes-image," 22-23.

¹⁰² Berlin 14207; Brussels E 2673.

¹⁰³ H. Ranke, *Die ägyptischen Personennamen. Band I: Verzeichnis der Namen* (Glückstadt: J. J. Augustin, 1935), 44.12.

¹⁰⁴ Ranke, *Personennamen* I, 44.6.

¹⁰⁵ Meeks, "Nom du dieu Bes," 423, citing *PT* § 1186.

¹⁰⁶ F. Vink, "The Principles of Apotropaic Magic on Middle Kingdom Wands," *AEM* 99 (2016-17): 13.

¹⁰⁷ *CT* VII, 492c.

¹⁰⁸ *CT* VII, 416c.

butcher with sharp violence, whom one cannot fight.”¹⁰⁹ His connection with the sun god is further implied by a justification of the deceased, “This my heart was not taken by Aha to Heliopolis.”¹¹⁰

Texts from the New Kingdom support this protective role. In a copy of the Book of the Dead from the 18th to 19th Dynasty,¹¹¹ the deceased sat in front of a Bes-figured being, seen in profile, who grasps the root of his tail with the left hand while the right holds a knife. The purpose of this spell was to protect the heart of the deceased. This appearance with a knife seems to have implied an ability to repel the enemies of the sun-god.¹¹² As we will discuss below,¹¹³ the “dwarf of clay” mentioned in anti-miscarriage spells London 30-31 and the “amulet of health” in records from Deir el-Medina likely referenced this god as well. It is only starting in the 21st Dynasty that the deity took up the name of Bes.¹¹⁴

2.2.1 Middle Kingdom-Second Intermediate Period Objects

Aha images were relatively common during this period, occurring in wands, figurines, amulets, a mask, small boxes, a headrest, and an ostracon. These images also included a female counterpart. The material suggests this deity’s role as a protective birth god was already established.

On the wands, Aha was one of the more common motifs, occurring on at least 39

¹⁰⁹ CT VII, 417a.

¹¹⁰ CT V, 58b; E. Naville, *Das ägyptischen Tottenbuch der XVIII. Bis XX. Dynastie I* (Berlin: A. Asher & Co., 1886), spell 28.

¹¹¹ Naville, *Tottenbuch*, spell 28.

¹¹² Altenmüller, *Apotropaia I*, 177.

¹¹³ See § 5.2.4.3.

¹¹⁴ D. Meeks, “Harpokrates,” *LÄ II* (1977): col. 1003.

wands.¹¹⁵ The deity can either appear as a male,¹¹⁶ a female,¹¹⁷ or a youth.¹¹⁸ Typically frontal, the figure commonly held snakes and sometimes lizards or hares, presumably representing mastery of their power to render them both safe and protective for an individual.¹¹⁹ Such a representation also occurred on a 12th Dynasty ostracon (Figure 2) from the quarry works at Lahun north of the pyramid of Senwosret II.¹²⁰ This type of imagery thus did not appear limited to the wands, which belonged in the tombs of the elite, with quarry workers also familiar with the motif.

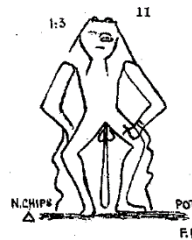


Figure 2 – Ostracon UC6557. Image from Petrie and Brunton, *Lahun II*, 14, pl. LXIX, 11.

¹¹⁵ Romano, “Bes-image,” 33.

¹¹⁶ Ex: Manchester 1799; MMA 15.5.197; MMA 22.1.79a-b; MMA 22.1.154a-b; Cairo JE 2007.04.58; MFA 20.1780.

¹¹⁷ Ex: Manchester 1799; MMA 15.5.197.

¹¹⁸ Ex: MMA 22.1.65.

¹¹⁹ R. Ritner, *The mechanics of ancient Egyptian magical practice* (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1993), 224 n. 1041, and 128n. 583.

¹²⁰ W.M.F. Petrie and G. Brunton, *Lahun II* (BSAE 33; London: Quaritch, 1923), 14, pl. LXIX, 11; Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 8; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 360 fig. 4.78.



Figure 3 – Figurine of Aha as a youth. Image from Petrie and Brunton, *Sedment I*, pl. XL.27.

Figure 4 – Liverpool 1977.110.2. Image from Miniaci, *Unbroken Stories*, fig. 12.

Figure 5 - Beirut Nat. Mus. 15377. Image from Dunand, *Fouilles des Byblos 2*, pl. xcv, no. 15377.

Figurines of Aha during this period generally fell under three categories (Table 1): male (Figures 4-5), female (Figures 6-8), and, the most rare, youth (Figure 3). In at least two cases, the figure grasps snakes in the hands, an image we commonly see on the contemporary magic wands. Excavators primarily found them in tombs, though one occurred in the Temple of Obelisks in Byblos. Importantly, one female Ahat figurine (Figure 8) originated from a deposit within a house in Lahun,¹²¹ which included a number of other magic-related items, such as clappers and a leonine Aha/Bes mask. This finding suggests the deity held a domestic role, despite most material in this period being restricted to funerary areas.

¹²¹ Petrie, *KGH*, 30, pl. VIII.14.



Figure 6 – MMA 15.3.1088. Image from online museum catalogue.

Figure 7 – MMA 15.3.1105. Image from online museum catalogue.

Figure 8 – Ahat/Beset figurine from Lahun. Image from Petrie, *KGH*, pl. 8.14.

Table 1 – Aha/Bes Figurines from MK-SIP

Site	Context	Date	Type	Posture	Material
Abydos	Tomb G62 ¹²²	12D.	Dwarf	standing, facing front, arms to thighs, holding snakes	Faience
Esna	Grave 275E ¹²³	MK / SIP	Dwarf	legs bent, hands on hips	Faience
Lisht North	Pit 367 ¹²⁴	MK-e.NK	Dwarf	standing, facing front, right hand on thigh, left arm folded in front	Gold

¹²² BM EA 37297: Accessed 6/1/2016 from museum catalogue.

¹²³ Liverpool 1977.110.2: D. Downes, *Excavations of Esna 1905-1906* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1974), 106, 129, fig. 90; Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 112-113 no. 99; P. Bienkowski and E. Southworth, *Egyptian antiquities in the Liverpool Museum I: A List of the provenanced objects* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips Ltd, 1986), 48; Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 48; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 358.

¹²⁴ MMA 22.1.59: Accessed 6/1/2016 from museum catalogue.

Dra Abu el-Naga (?)	N/A ¹²⁵	SIP (?)	Dwarf	legs bent, arms to thighs, each hand originally grasping painted undulating serpent	Faience
Lisht North	Tomb 475 ¹²⁶	l.12-m.13D.	Female		Ivory
Lisht North	Surface ¹²⁷	MK	Female	standing, facing front, left arm hanging down side, right arm extending forward	Wood
Ramesseum	MK Tomb ¹²⁸	12D.	Female	standing, facing front, legs straight, arms down sides	Wood
Sedment	Tomb 1300 ¹²⁹	MK/SIP	Youth	arms either side of stomach, fists clenched as if holding object in each hand	Ivory
Byblos ¹³⁰	Temple of Obelisks	MK	Dwarf		limestone

¹²⁵ Baltimore WAG 620: H. Wallis, *Egyptian ceramic art: the MacGregor collection. A contribution towards the history of Egyptian pottery* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1898), pl. 2, 1; Ballod, *Prolegomena*, 39-40, fig. 17; G. Steindorff, *Catalogue of the Egyptian sculpture in the Walters Art Gallery* (Baltimore: Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, 1946), 143, pl. XCIV, no. 624; Romano, "Bes-image," II, Cat. 49.

¹²⁶ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 151, 362 (from tomb cards Lisht N-2156-2166).

¹²⁷ MMA: 15.3.1088: Romano, "Bes-image," II, Cat. 54; J.P. Allen, *The art of medicine in ancient Egypt* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Arts, 2005), 31; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 362.

¹²⁸ Manchester 1790: J.E. Quibell, *The Ramesseum* (BSAE 2. London: B. Quaritch, 1898), pl. 2; Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 110-111 with fig. 1; Romano, "Bes-image," II, Cat. 52; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 362 fig. 4.81.

¹²⁹ UC16069: Romano, "Bes-image," II, Cat. 7; Petrie and Brunton, *Sedment I*, 18, pls. XL, 27 and XLII, 7; B. Hornemann, *Types of ancient Egyptian statuary*, V. I (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1951), no. 258; C. Sourdivé, *La main dans l'Égypte pharaonique: recherches de morphologie structurale sur les objets égyptiens comportant une main* (Berne; New York: P. Lang, 1984), 114, pl. XXIX, 6; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 363, fig. 4.84.

¹³⁰ Beirut Nat. Mus. 15377: M. Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos II* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1950), 767, pl. XCV; Romano, "Bes-image," II, Cat. 53B; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 358.

Lahun ¹³¹	hole in floor of a house, found with pair of clappers	MK	Female	standing, facing front, legs straight, arms down sides	Wood
N/A ¹³²	N/A	MK/SIP	Dwarf	Standing with hands on hips and legs bent	Ivory
N/A ¹³³	N/A	MK	Female	standing, facing front, legs straight, arms down sides	Wood

Aha amulets during the Middle Kingdom through New Kingdom showed a frontal figure with bent legs and leonine tail. They occurred in graves, with some on necklaces in association with other birth-related amulets, such as cowrie shells. Similar to the Aha/Bes figurines, one such amulet occurred in domestic context. Like the magic wands,¹³⁴ the amulets likely originally served people during life before their final deposition in tombs. These amulets also appeared widespread, with occurrences from the Memphis/Fayum region to Upper Egypt and Nubia (Table 2).

Table 2 – Aha/Bes Amulets of the MK-SIP

Museum No.	Date	Site	Context	Material	No.	Bibliography
Manchester 5119a	12D.	Abydos	necklace with frog amulet	faience	2	Found on museum website.
London UC 43035	SIP	Abydos	necklace with 28 cowrie shells	faience	2	Found on museum website.

¹³¹ Petrie, *KGH*, 30, pl. VIII.14; Ballod, *Prolegomena*, 40; Bosse-Griffiths, “A Beset amulet,” 103-104, fig. 3; Sourdivé, *Main*, 114, pl. XXIX; Romano, “Bes-image,” II, Cat. 50; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 362 fig. 4.82.

¹³² Copenhagen NCG 1380 (A 186): M.P. Mogensen, *La Glyptothèque Ny Carlsberg: la collection égyptienne* (Copenhagen: F Bagge, 1930), 110, pl. 34; Romano, “Bes-image,” II, Cat. 46.

¹³³ Moscow 5667: Romano, “Bes-image,” II, Cat. 53A; S. Hодjash, *Изображения древнеегипетского бога пса в собрании ГМИИ им. А.С. Пушкина*, 114 no. 86; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 362.

¹³⁴ See below, § 4.3.2.

N/A	MK	Esna	Grave 153	faience	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , Inventory.
N/A	MK	Esna	Grave 272	faience	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 52 (illus.), Inventory.
N/A	MK	Esna	Grave 342	faience	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , Inventory.
Liverpool E. 5440	MK	Esna	Grave 346	faience	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 52 (illus.), 132; Romano, “Bes-image,” II, Cat. 45.
N/A	MK	Esna	Grave 346	faience	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , Inventory.
N/A	MK	Esna	Grave 41B	faience	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , Inventory.
N/A	SIP	Esna	Grave 268	Pottery	3	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , Inventory.
N/A	SIP	Esna	Grave 275	faience	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 52 (illus.), Inventory.
N/A	SIP	Esna	Grave 275		1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , Inventory.
Liverpool 16.11.06.232	SIP	Esna	Grave 325	Faience	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 52 (illus.).
MFA 14.1607	SIP	Kerma	K IV grave 453 no.11	Faience	1	Found on museum website.
Cairo JE 44958	MK	Lisht		Ivory	1	Romano, <i>The Bes-image</i> II, Cat. 51.
MMA 33.1.42	12D.	Lisht South	Mastaba of Senwosretankh, surface burial 34-37 inside basket 33.1.37a	Faience	2	Found on museum website.
London UC 38838	SIP	Rifeh	necklace with amulets including 2 green faience Hathor heads	Faience	1	Found on museum website.
Manchester 157c	12D.	Lahun	associated with 2 strings of beads	Faience	1	Found on museum website.
N/A	MK	Shalfak		Faience	1	Romano, “Bes-image,” II, Cat. 44.

Excavators found a 12th Dynasty leonine mask (Figure 9) of cartonnage from the same house in Lahun as one of the Ahat figurines.¹³⁵ Such masks also occurred in tomb reliefs in association with dancers. In the tomb-chamber of Kheruef,¹³⁶ the bottom two registers above a scene of a solar barque depicted female dancers and musicians with a hymn to Hathor in between (Figure 10). The extreme left bottom register depicted three androgynous figures each wearing a lion-mask following the musicians, with the one on the right holding an arm-shaped wand. Likewise, a 5th Dynasty limestone block BM 994 (Figure 11) depicted in the central register a group of dancers, with a lion-masked figure holding an arm-shaped wand following behind.¹³⁷ Another scene, from the forehall of Sahure's Pyramid Temple at Abusir,¹³⁸ bears a close parallel to the scene in Kheruef's tomb, showing a masked androgynous figure among dancers. It is uncertain whether these figures were supposed to be deities or dancers wearing masks, though Volokhine had suggested the latter.¹³⁹ Another parallel is an Old Kingdom limestone statuette depicting a nude, stocky figure wearing the same hairstyle.¹⁴⁰ Though these depictions occurred in funerary scenes, we know from other sources that dancers, particularly those associated with Hathor, also held functions related to childbirth.¹⁴¹

¹³⁵ Petrie, *KGH*, pl. VII.27. We also know a mask of Bes in silt dating to the 19th Dynasty, cf. Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 276.

¹³⁶ E.F. Wente, "Hathor at the Jubilee," in E.B. Hauser (ed.), *Studies in honor of John A. Wilson* (Chicago: SAOC 35, 1969), 84; Epigraphic Survey of the Oriental Institute of University of Chicago, *The Tomb of Kheruef: Theban Tomb* 192 (Chicago: OIP 102, 1980), pl. 24, 40; Horváth, "Hathor and her festivals at Lahun," 137.

¹³⁷ T.G.H. James, *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae* I (2nd ed., London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1961), 992, pl. 25; Wente, "Hathor at the Jubilee," 86; Romano, "Bes-Image," II, 11-4 (cat. 31).

¹³⁸ L. Borchardt, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs S'ahu-re* II (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1913), 38-9, pl. 22; Wente, "Hathor at the Jubilee," 87-8; Romano, "Bes-Image," II, 507 (Cat. 1).

¹³⁹ Volokhine, "Dieux," 82-4.

¹⁴⁰ L. Borchardt, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Nefer-ir-ke-re*^c (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1909), 70.

¹⁴¹ See below, § 3.2.1, especially § 3.2.1.5; § 5.4; § 7.2.2.

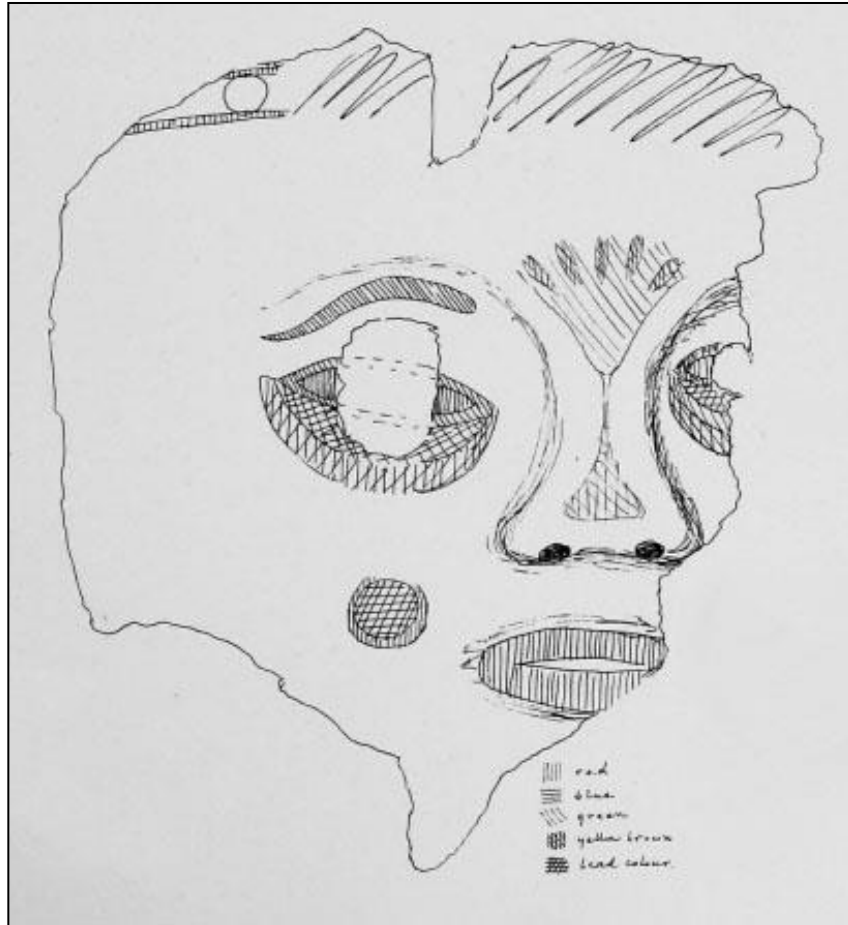


Figure 9 – Aha mask from Lahun. Image from Petrie, *KGH*, pl. 8.

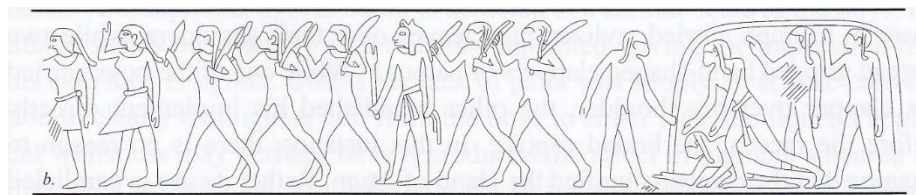
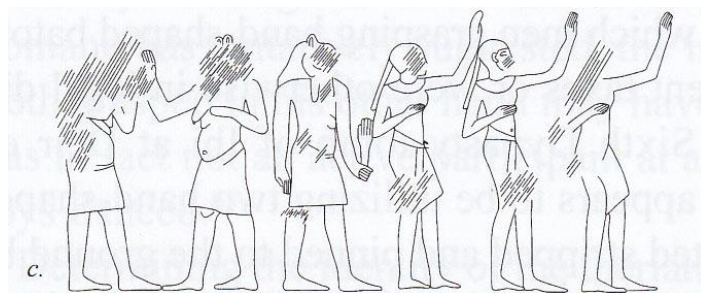


Figure 10 – Aha figures from tomb of Khireuf. Image from Morris, “Middle Kingdom Clappers,” fig. 9c.

Figure 11 – Aha figure from BM EA 994. Image from Morris, “Middle Kingdom Clappers,” fig. 9b.

Three small boxes from Middle Kingdom through Second Intermediate Period tombs contained imagery of Aha. One such steatite box from Asassif represented a frontal Aha on one the long sides.¹⁴² Another, a cylindrical ivory box from Tomb E3 in Abydos, likely dating to the 13th Dynasty, possessed an incised frontal Aha figure with round ears, tail between legs, a simple belt, and no mane holding snakes.¹⁴³ The third, painted wooden box Fitzwilliam E.15.1907, which excavators found in a 13th Dynasty tomb in Rifeh, illustrate on both the long sides and short sides a red-painted muscular figure with penis holding a snake in each hand¹⁴⁴ While these boxes had funerary context, they may have originally served a daily-life function, similar to amulets. Indeed, given the occurrence of such apotropaic imagery on bedroom objects,¹⁴⁵ the boxes may have had initial use in the bedroom.

Aha also occurred on bedroom items of the period. A notable example is the headrest of Neferhotep (Cairo JE 6143) from Dra Abu el-Nega, which depicted on one of its sides on the base a frontal Ahat-figure with splayed legs and leonine ears holding a snake in each hand.¹⁴⁶ The artist incised a *sz*-sign on either side of the head. An openwork bed inlay, found in Alaca Höyük, was an ivory piece representing a frontal leonine Aha figure with prominent genitalia.¹⁴⁷

The figure of Aha during the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period appeared most often as a leonine man, but sometimes as a female or youth. At times, the figure was an

¹⁴² J. Budka, *Bestattungsbrauch und Friedhofsstruktur im Asasif: eine Untersuchung der spätzeitlichen Befunde anhand der Ergebnisse der österreichischen Ausgrabungen in den Jahren 1969-1977* (Wien: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010), 712-713, cat. No. 872; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 360.

¹⁴³ J. Garstang, *El Arábah: a cemetery of the Middle Kingdom; survey of the Old Kingdom temenos; graffiti from the temple of Sety* (BSAE 6; London: Quaritsch, 1901), 5, 25-26, pl. 1, 11, 14; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 360 fig. 4.76.

¹⁴⁴ W.M.F. Petrie, *Giza and Rifeh* (London: School of archaeology in Egypt, 1907), 20-21, pl. 24; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 360 fig. 4.77.

¹⁴⁵ See below, § 6.2.16.1.

¹⁴⁶ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 359 fig. 4.75.

¹⁴⁷ J. Aruz et al., *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium* (New York; New Haven, 2008), 148 no. 87.

androgynous male with pendulous breasts, which were characteristics associated with fertility and, in particular, fecundity figures associated with the Nile.¹⁴⁸ Especially notable during this period is the deposit of objects associated with magic in a house in Lahun. In particular, the mask, Ahat figurine, and clappers imply dancers connected to Hathor. As we will discuss later,¹⁴⁹ certain nude female figurines of the Middle Kingdom appeared to have specifically depicted these dancers. Such material from household contexts imply that the deity already had a domestic role, which became more greatly expressed in the New Kingdom. Another significant feature during the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period is the involvement of Aha with the bedroom, seen especially with the headrests. The small boxes discussed above, which likely held household items such as cosmetics, perhaps also represented this bedroom theme, given the similarity of their imagery to that on apotropaia of the same period.¹⁵⁰ This bedroom association then became especially prominent during the New Kingdom.

2.2.2 New Kingdom Objects

Objects showing the Bes-image rose considerably in popularity, particularly in terms of amulets. In contrast to the Middle Kingdom, almost all New Kingdom figures of Bes are male. Representations of Bes during this period were standardized to show the god as a dwarfish figure, in contrast to the variety of forms shown in the Middle Kingdom figurines.¹⁵¹ The thin-limbed Bes phased out by the reign of Amenhotep II.¹⁵² Other features, mainly a plumed headdress and a kilt, first occurred around the reign of Amenhotep III.¹⁵³ According to Romano, the changes in the representation of Bes in the New Kingdom may be due to an unusually high infant mortality

¹⁴⁸ For more on fecundity figures in Egyptian art, see J. Baines, *Fecundity Figures: Egyptian Personification and the Iconology of a Genre* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 2001).

¹⁴⁹ See below, § 3.2.1.

¹⁵⁰ See below, § 6.2.16.1.

¹⁵¹ Bosse-Griffiths, "A Beset amulet," 98-110; Romano, "Bes-image," I, 64.

¹⁵² Romano, "The origin of the Bes image," 43, n. 22: As on Edinburgh 1956.113, ebony and copper gilt box.

¹⁵³ Romano, "Bes-image," II, 347, 527.

rate at this time, resulting in the leonine man no longer seen as potent.¹⁵⁴ Given the higher death rate for dwarves in utero,¹⁵⁵ Egyptians may have viewed adult dwarfs as especially able to defeat the dangers Bes was supposed to confront.¹⁵⁶

Bes amulets during the New Kingdom numbered in the hundreds. Excavations found these objects in tomb,¹⁵⁷ temple,¹⁵⁸ and particularly town contexts.¹⁵⁹ The amulets, all modelled in the round, were most often made of glazed composition, with very occasional amulets of cornelian and glazed steatite. Almost all were male,¹⁶⁰ though there are a few rare Ahat/Beset depictions that continued in this period. The amulets ranged from the usual frontal style,¹⁶¹ to a side-view where he holds a tambourine or drum, the latter being particularly popular at Amarna (Figure 12).¹⁶² This version occurred also at Kom Rabi'a, Malkata, and Mirgissa, indicating it was most popular in capital cities of the late 18th Dynasty. He also occurred in other jewelry, such as rings, beads, disks, and bracelets.¹⁶³ As we will discuss below, it's possible that the "birth amulet" *s3w msw* mentioned in some Deir el-Medina purchase records may have been an amulet

¹⁵⁴ Romano, "Bes-image," I, 111.

¹⁵⁵ K. Weeks, *The anatomical knowledge of the ancient Egyptians and the representation of the human figure in Egyptian art* (New Haven: Yale University, 1970), 159.

¹⁵⁶ Romano, "Bes-image," I, 111-112.

¹⁵⁷ Ex: Abydos (D. Randall-MacIver and A. Mace, *El-Amrah and Abydos* [London: EEF, 1902], 72, 88, and 98, pl. XLV); Buhen (D. Randall-MacIver and L. Woolley, *Buhen* [Eckley B. Coxe Junior expedition to Nubia 7-8; Philadelphia: University Museum, 1911], 198, 221, 231, 233, pl. LV); Esna (Downes, *Esna*, 52 (illus.), tomb list.); Gurob (Brunton and Engelbach, *Gurob*, pl. XLII, a, e, g); Rifeh (W.M.F. Petrie, *Giza and Rifeh* [London: EEF, 1907], pl. XXVII).

¹⁵⁸ Ex: Faras (Pinch, *Votive offerings to Hathor*, 291, pls. 8.36, 60A); Mirgissa (Vercoutter, *Mirgissa I*, 240 [no. 18], 341 [no. 19, 21-6]).

¹⁵⁹ Ex: Amarna (W.M.F. Petrie, *Tell el Amarna* [London: Methuen & Co., 1989], pl. XVII, 280, 287-288, 290-1, 299; XVIII, 358; CoA II, pl. L, LV; Beth Shan (F. James and P. McGovern, *Beth Shan: A Study of Levels VII and VIII* [Philadelphia: Penn Museum, 1993], 126, fig. 58.5-6; Cowie, "Bes Amulets," 515 [Reg. No. 889029]); Deir el-Balah (T. Dothan, *Excavations at the Cemetery of Deir el-Balah* [Jerusalem: Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2010], fig. 204); Memphis (Giddy, *Kom Rabi'a*, 84, 86, 87, pls. 19-20, 84).

¹⁶⁰ With Exception of Bosse-Griffiths, "A Beset amulet," 98-99, possibly from Amarna.

¹⁶¹ Randall-MacIver and Woolley, *Buhen*, 198, 233; Downes, *Esna*, 52 (illus.), tomb list; G. Brunton and R. Engelbach, *Gurob* (London: British school of archaeology in Egypt, 1927), XLII, g.

¹⁶² Ex: Petrie, *Tell el Amarna*, pl. XVII, 280, 288, 290-1, 299; XVIII, 358; CoA II, pl. L (LV).

¹⁶³ Ex: Romano, "Bes-image," Cat. 68, 72, 82, 117-8.

of Bes.¹⁶⁴

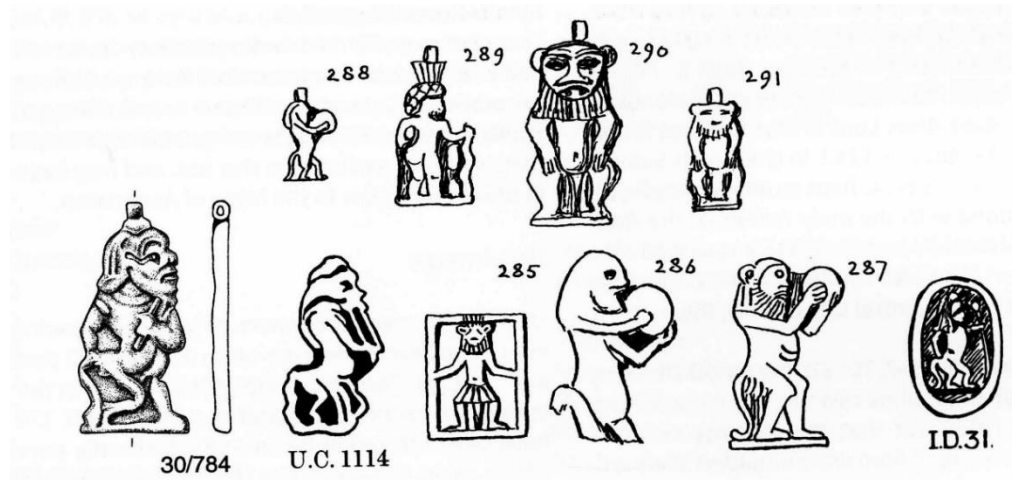


Figure 12 – Range of Aha/Bes amulets from Amarna. Image from Stevens, *Private Religion*, fig. II.2.2.

Figurines of Bes during the New Kingdom occurred predominantly in town contexts and tended to be fragmentary. Stevens had reported almost two dozen such figurines from Amarna, which were mostly faience (Figure 14), with others in pottery, stone, and, in one case, metal.¹⁶⁵ Giddy reported five pottery examples from Kom Rabi'a (Figure 13).¹⁶⁶ Some pottery Bes figurines had a plumed crown,¹⁶⁷ while others featured drilled holes for the insertion of such a headdress.¹⁶⁸ This plumed headdress form, which became standard for the deity in the Third Intermediate Period, occurred in a number of New Kingdom objects from domestic contexts. Indeed, excavations of Amarna uncovered several examples of such model feather crowns.¹⁶⁹ Paint was relatively common on the pottery figurines, particularly red.¹⁷⁰ This red color, also

¹⁶⁴ See in § 5.5.

¹⁶⁵ Stevens, *Private religion*, 79-81.

¹⁶⁶ Giddy, *Kom Rabi'a*, 46-48, pls. 13, 81, 82.

¹⁶⁷ Giddy, *Kom Rabi'a*, 47, pls. 13, 82 (EES 811).

¹⁶⁸ Berlin ÄMP 30113: L. Borchardt and H. Rieke, *Die Wohnhäuser in Tell El-Amarna* (Mann: DAIK, 1980), 41; Stevens, *Private religion*, 79; EES 461: Giddy, *Kom Rabi'a*, 46-47, pls. 13, 81, 82.

¹⁶⁹ CoA II, 13; Borchardt and Rieke, *Wohnhäuser*, 73, 80.

¹⁷⁰ Red: Stevens, *Private religion*, 80 (21/446); Giddy, *Kom Rabi'a*, 46-47, pls. 13, 81, 82 (EES 423, 549, 811). Red and blue paint: Borchardt and Rieke, *Wohnhäuser*, 134; Stevens, *Private religion*, 80, Fig. II.3.1 (13/14.620). Blue: Giddy, *Kom Rabi'a*, 46-47, pls. 13, 81, 82 (EES 461).

seen in contemporary ostraca depictions of the god, appears associated with his domestic functions. Some of the faience Bes figurines likely depicted a dancing Bes,¹⁷¹ such as a more complete figurine said to originate from Amarna (Figure 15).¹⁷² In contrast, the faience figurines from the tomb of Tiye held small dishes (Figure 16).¹⁷³ This dish/pot-holding role already appeared in Middle Kingdom dwarf figurines.¹⁷⁴ At least a couple of Bes figurines harkened to the god's association with music, depicting him with a drum/cymbal¹⁷⁵ or double flute.¹⁷⁶ This musician form also occurred in the legs of some contemporary beds. As we will discuss below, several medical-magical spells of this period mentioned a "dwarf of clay" or "faience dwarf," which may have referred to figures of Bes.¹⁷⁷

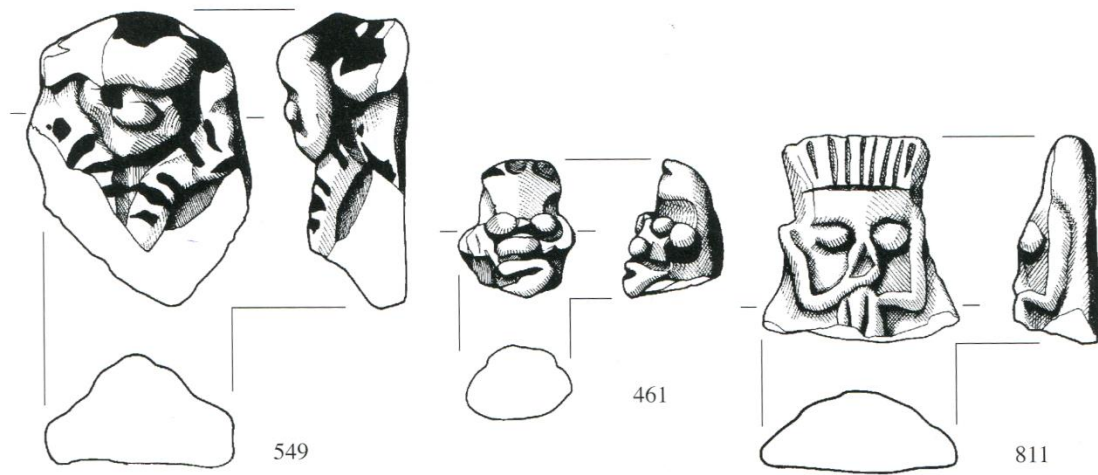


Figure 13 – NK pottery Bes figurines from Kom Rabi'a. Image from Giddy, *Kom Rabi'a*, pl. 13.

¹⁷¹ Stevens, *Private religion*, 80, referring to Berlin ÄMP 25389, 25412, and 30720.

¹⁷² A.P. Kozloff, "Running or Dancing Bes," in *Egypt's Dazzling Sun: Amenhotep III and his World*, ed. A.P. Kozloff and B. Bryan (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1992), 226-7, Cat. 35.

¹⁷³ Th. Davis, *The tomb of Queen Tiye: The discovery of the tomb* (London: Constable and Co., 1910), 37, pl. I, 3; Ballod, *Prolegomena*, 46, fig. 29; Romano, "Bes-image," Cat. 110.

¹⁷⁴ See below, § 3.1.1.

¹⁷⁵ Stevens, *Private religion*, 81 (35/86).

¹⁷⁶ Giddy, *Kom Rabi'a*, 46, pls. 13, 81 (EES 380).

¹⁷⁷ See in § 5.2.4.3.



Figure 14 – NK Bes figurine of faience from Amarna. Image from CoA II, pl. 29.2.

Figure 15 - Berlin ÄMP 20484, said to be from Amarna. Image from Kozloff, “Running or Dancing Bes,” 226.

Figure 16 - Cairo JE 39660. Image from Davis, *Tomb of Queen Tiye*, 37, pl. I, 1.

Ostraca depicting the deity mainly came from Deir el-Medina (Figure 17) and Amarna.

The god may be represented either frontally,¹⁷⁸ in profile,¹⁷⁹ or simply as a frontal head.¹⁸⁰ He commonly wore a feather crown¹⁸¹ and a kilt.¹⁸² One example from Deir el-Medina depicted the god with wings.¹⁸³ In cases where he held objects, he tended to hold items similar to those he held in apotropaia,¹⁸⁴ mainly snakes¹⁸⁵ and a knife with *s3*-sign,¹⁸⁶ as well as blue lotus plants.¹⁸⁷ The latter occurred on some Third Intermediate Period bed models.¹⁸⁸ A couple of ostraca

¹⁷⁸ Cairo IFAO 3331-2 (Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 96, fig. 30; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, 128, pl. LXXXI, nos. 2621-2; Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 182A-B.), Liverpool 56.21.622 from Amarna (Bienkowski and Southworth, *Egyptian antiquities*, 22.).

¹⁷⁹ Cairo JE 59386A (G. Martin, *The Royal Tomb at El-Amarna* I (ASE 35; London: EES, 1974), 75, pl. 49 (no. 272); Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 114.); Cairo IFAO 3487 and 3327 (Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, fig. 33; Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 181, 182C.).

¹⁸⁰ Brooklyn 16.67 from Amarna (J. Capart, *Travels in Egypt: December 1880 to May 1891; letters of Charles Edwin Wilbour* (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1936), ill. On p. 336 (not mentioned in text); Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 115.); Turin S.09541 from Deir el-Medina (Accessed from online museum catalogue 6/1/2016).

¹⁸¹ Brooklyn 16.67, Cairo IFAO 3331-2.

¹⁸² Cairo IFAO 3327, 3331-2.

¹⁸³ Cairo IFAO 3332.

¹⁸⁴ See Chapter 6.

¹⁸⁵ Cairo IFAO 3327.

¹⁸⁶ Cairo JE 59386A.

¹⁸⁷ Cairo IFAO 3331.

¹⁸⁸ See Del Vesco, *Letti Votivi*, 77 (cat. 4), 83 (Cat. 16), 93 (Cat. 36), and 105 (Cat. 59).

preserved red paint for the deity.¹⁸⁹ The other main type of ostraca are Wochenlaube scenes, where Bes often appeared as decoration of the bed.¹⁹⁰



Figure 17 – Bes ostraca from Deir el-Medina. Images from Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, fig. 30 (left) and 33 (right).

Continuing his bedroom association, Aha/Bes also occurred on pieces of furniture. While some royal chairs featured Bes and Taweret,¹⁹¹ beds and headrests more commonly depicted Bes during this period. Most beds and bed-decoration with Bes imagery occurred in town contexts,¹⁹² though excavators also found some in tomb¹⁹³ and temple contexts.¹⁹⁴ Relief bed panels (Figure 18) often portrayed him wearing a plumed headdress¹⁹⁵ and a kilt.¹⁹⁶ He commonly held

¹⁸⁹ Liverpool 56.21.622 and Turin S.09541.

¹⁹⁰ See below, § 7.4.1.

¹⁹¹ Th. Davis et al., *Tomb of Iouiya and Touiou: the finding of the tomb* (London: A. Constable and Co., 1907), pls. XXXIII-XXXVI.

¹⁹² Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 98, 108, figs. 32 and 40; Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 176-7; M.J. Raven, “Women’s beds from Deir el-Medina,” in *The workman’s progress, Studies in the village of Deir el-Medina and documents from western Thebes in honour of Rob Demarée*, ed. B. Haring et al. (Egyptologische Uitgaven 28, Leiden/Leuven: 2014), 191-204, figs. 1-4.

¹⁹³ Edinburgh 1921.1490: (Brunton and Engelbach, *Gurob*, 15-16, pl. XVIII, 19; Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 175.); Cairo CG 51109-51110 (Davis et al, *Tomb of Iouiya and Touiou*, pl. XXXVII and illus. opposite p. 37; J.E. Quibell, *Tomb of Yuua and Thuiu* (CGC 43; Cairo: IFAO, 1908), 51, pls. XXVIII-XXXI; Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 86-87.); JE 62015-6 (Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 119-120; G. Killen, *Egyptian Furniture I* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2017), 32, pl. 40.

¹⁹⁴ Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 174.

¹⁹⁵ Bruyère, “Bes-image,” Cat. 174; Cairo CG 51110; Cairo JE 62015-6.

¹⁹⁶ Bruyère, “Bes-image,” Cat. 174; Cairo CG 51109-10, Cairo JE 62015-6; Edinburgh 1921.1490.

knives,¹⁹⁷ though sometimes *sz*-signs,¹⁹⁸ snakes,¹⁹⁹ and drums.²⁰⁰ He can appear alongside Taweret or standing lions.²⁰¹ Bed legs in the form of the deity with known context occurred in Deir el-Medina (Figure 19).²⁰² These represented him standing frontally on a tapered base, wearing a kilt, and placing his hands either on the hips or holding a double flute. A steatite figure from Deir el-Medina (Figure 20) represented him similarly, with hands on hips and tongue sticking out, and the four holes at the back of the figure indicate it likely attached to furniture.²⁰³ As Raven noted,²⁰⁴ similar beds with Bes-figures on the legs occurred the Wochenaube ostraca and the Third Intermediate Period model beds, and these beds likely served as birth beds. Likewise, several tombs represented Bes-figures under the bed.²⁰⁵



Figure 18 – Bed panels from CG 51109. Image from Quibell, *Tomb of Yuaa and Thuiu*, pl. XXIX.

¹⁹⁷ Bruyère, “Bes-image,” Cat. 174; Cairo CG 51109-10, Cairo JE 62015.

¹⁹⁸ Cairo CG 51109-10.

¹⁹⁹ Cairo JE 62015.

²⁰⁰ Cairo CG 51110.

²⁰¹ Davis et al, *Tomb of Iouiya and Touiou*, XXXVII; Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 119-120.

²⁰² Romano, “Bes-image,” Cat. 176; Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 98, 108, fig. 40; Raven, “Women’s beds from Deir el-Medina,” 191-204, figs. 1-4.

²⁰³ 29/283: *CoA* II, 29/283, pl. XXXVIII. 1-3; Stevens, *Private religion*, 79.

²⁰⁴ Raven, “Women’s beds from Deir el-Medina,” 199-201.

²⁰⁵ Cairo T 17.6.24.13, relief from the tomb of Ipuya (*PM* III²/2, 555); TT 48 of Amenemhat Surer, scene (7).V (*PM* I²/1, 89); TT 99 of Sennefer, scene (10) (*PM* I²/1, 205).



Figure 19 – Bes-figure bed legs from Deir el-Medina. Image from Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, fig. 32.

Figure 20 – Steatite Bes-figure from Amarna. Image from *CoA* II, pl. 38, figs. 2-3.

Perraud noted seventy headrests with demonic decoration, with Bes one of the most common figures.²⁰⁶ One interesting example depicted the head of the god emerging from a blue lotus flower.²⁰⁷ Representations of Bes on headrests during this period also had him wearing a kilt and plumed headdress, such as a headrest from Memphis, where the god also holds a knife and a *sz*-sign (Figure 21).²⁰⁸ A type of motif most common on furniture and headrests, dating from Amenhotep III to the 19th Dynasty, which depicted figures with knives emerging from their feet, most frequently represented Bes in this fashion.²⁰⁹ One such depiction, on a headrest found in Deir el-Medina (Figure 23),²¹⁰ represented Bes grasping a snake and likewise depicted a griffin and standing lion, beings which were typical of magic wands. Another headrest with context, from Gurob (Figure 22), also represented Bes grasping snakes.²¹¹ This “foot knife” variation

²⁰⁶ M. Perraud, “Les appuis-tête de l’Égypte ancienne: typologie et significations” (unpublished PhD Diss., Strasbourg, 1997).

²⁰⁷ Petrie and Brunton, *Sedment* I, 5, pl. 15.24.

²⁰⁸ N. S. Picardo, “Base of a headrest,” in *Searching for Ancient Egypt: Art, Architecture, and Artifacts*, ed. D.P. Silverman (Dallas: Dallas Museum of Art, 1997), 222-3, Cat. 71B.

²⁰⁹ K. Szpakowska, “Feet of Fury: Warrior Dancers of the New Kingdom,” in *Rich and Great: Studies in Honour of Anthony J. Spalinger on the Occasion of his 70th Feast of Thoth*, ed. R. Landgráfová and J. Mynářová (Prague: Charles University in Prague, 2016), 313-323, especially table on 317.

²¹⁰ BM EA63783: M. Bierbrier, *Les artistes de Pharaon: Deir el-Médineh et la Vallée des Rois* (Paris: Editions Fatou, 2002), 132-133 [73].

²¹¹ A.P. Thomas, *Gurob: A New Kingdom town* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips Ltd., 1981), Cat. 68.

appears to have built upon the imagery of Middle Kingdom apotropaia, which had figures grasping knives with their main limbs, and served to protect the sleeper and intimidate foes.²¹²

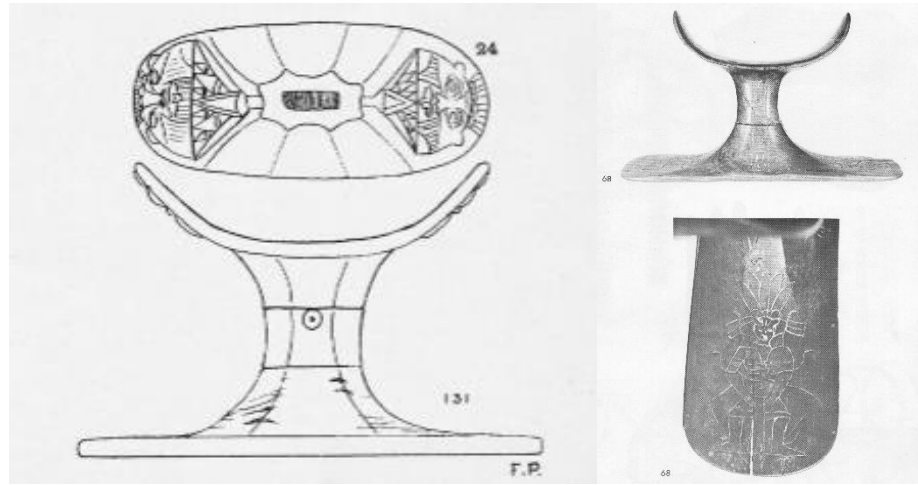


Figure 21 - Headrest from Sedment. Image from Petrie and Brunton, *Sedment* I, 5, pl. 15.24.

Figure 22 – Headrest UC16065. Image from Thomas, *Gurob*, Cat. 68, pl. 44.

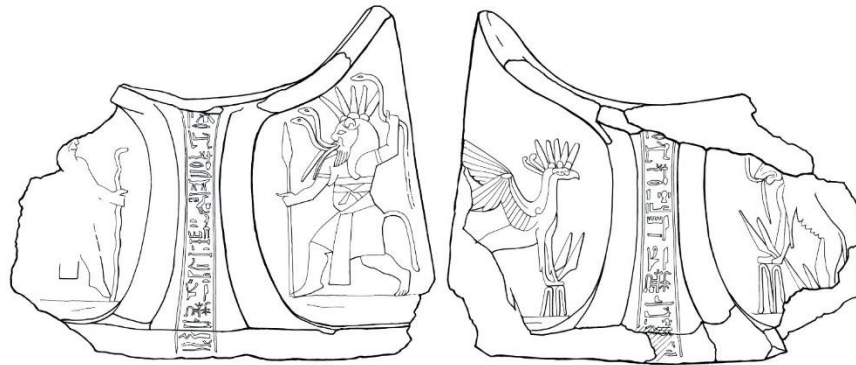


Figure 23 – Headrest BM EA63783. Image from online museum catalogue (assessed 4/1/2019).

The representation of Bes in the New Kingdom, while standardized, featured continuity and expansions to his iconography. The deity as a musician, seen particularly on amulets, figurines, and the legs of beds, invoked his ability to drive away malevolent forces to protect the child or sleeper.²¹³ This form, as well as the dancing Bes, both occurred in objects with domestic

²¹² Szpakowska, “Feet of Fury,” 314-5, 322.

²¹³ H. Altenmüller, “Bes,” *LÄ* I (1975), col. 722.

and daily-life functions. While he shifted to a more dwarfish appearance, Bes still continued to wield snakes, *s3*-signs, and knives in ostraca, beds, and headrests, like in the Middle Kingdom. The so-called “foot knife” Bes, associated with the standing lion and Taweret, appeared to have been a New Kingdom variant on the knife-wielding Bes. Also during the New Kingdom, Bes became associated with the blue lotus, a known symbol of the daily rebirth of the sun god.²¹⁴ That representation, in turn, built upon the previous relationship between the sun god and apotropaic deities like Aha/Bes.²¹⁵

2.2.3 Conclusions

The objects on which Aha/Bes occurred were highly associated with the bedroom and fertility and birth, such as wands, beds and headrests, *Wochenlaube* ostraca, royal birth scenes, and domestic wall paintings. Frequently, this deity appeared in association with Ipet/Taweret. Likewise, a number of objects, such as amulets, came from town contexts, suggesting usage of such imagery in daily life. Such household material became prevalent in the New Kingdom, similar to other items pertaining to birth and fertility.²¹⁶ Throughout pharaonic history, the Bes-image was not limited to objects used by one class.²¹⁷

The iconography of Aha/Bes shifted from the Middle Kingdom lion deity, who can either occur as a male, female, or youth, to the standardized dwarfish figure of the New Kingdom. Ahat/Beset, a figure who occurred on a number of Middle Kingdom figurines and wands, became much rarer during the New Kingdom. As will be discussed below, this dwarfish figure appears to have subsumed the fertility role previously held by Middle Kingdom dwarf figurines.²¹⁸ Also

²¹⁴ J. Dittmar, *Blumen und Blumensträuße als Opfergabe im alten Ägypten* (MÄS 43. München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1986), 132.

²¹⁵ See below, § 6.3.3.2.

²¹⁶ See below, § 8.2.1

²¹⁷ Romano, *The Bes-image in pharaonic Egypt*, 23.

²¹⁸ See below, § 3.1.2.

during the New Kingdom, Egyptians developed new forms of the deity, namely Bes as musician or dancer and, in bedroom objects, Bes with knives emerging from his feet.

Similar to Aha/Bes, Hathor became more popular in private objects like amulets in the New Kingdom. While the former shifted from a leonine man to a dwarfish lion, the iconography of Hathor remained more consistent. Aha/Bes was one of the deities most clearly linked to concepts of fertility and birth, and so objects with his imagery tended to belong to this sphere. In contrast, Hathor held a more complex role in Egyptian theology, so assessing which role a particular object invoked is more difficult.

2.3 Hathor

Given Hathor's connection to both birth and renewal in the afterlife, it is not always clear which of the material culture relating to her belonged to her fertility role versus her netherworld function. Imagery of the goddess occurred from the beginning of Egyptian history, both in human-cow hybrid form²¹⁹ and as a cow.²²⁰ Throughout Egyptian history, she had embodied various aspects from a cow, a tree goddess, goddess of the deceased, and patron of royalty and music and dance.²²¹

As cow-goddess, Hathor was a wild cow from the Delta who symbolized rebirth.²²² For example, vignettes of the Book of the Dead depicted Hathor the cow emerging from a mountain, on which is the sign of the west, therefore the realm of the dead.²²³ The Coffin Texts likewise

²¹⁹ Ex: C.J. Bleeker, *Hathor and Thoth: Two key figures of the ancient Egyptian religion* (Supplements to *NUMEN* XXVI; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973), 28, n.3.

²²⁰ W.M.F. Petrie, *Royal Tombs of the first dynasty I* (London; Boston: EEF, 1900), XXVI, 71; II, V, 1; H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 172.

²²¹ For the latter, see Bleeker, *Hathor and Thoth*, 51-58.

²²² Bleeker, *Hathor*, 30-31.

²²³ Naville, *Todtenbuch I*, pl. CCXII.

mention the cave of Hathor, the opening of which was the epiphany of the goddess.²²⁴ This concept is depicted in the Hathor shrine of the 11th Dynasty temple at Deir el-Bahari, where Hathor as a cow stands in an artificial cave.²²⁵ The great temple at Deir el-Bahari also illustrated the goddess as a cow.²²⁶ Related, but not directly tied to the myth are vignettes of BD Spell 148, which depicted a number of cows and a bull whose role was to provide nourishment for the deceased.²²⁷

From as early as the Old Kingdom, Hathor bore the title *nb.t nh.t*, “mistress of the sycamore,” a title highly tied to her funerary role.²²⁸ As early as the Pyramid Texts, Egyptian viewed the sycamore as a tree in the eastern horizon upon which the gods sat.²²⁹ This association was likely due to the fact that sycamores grow in desert edges and margins of cultivation, connecting them to both sides of the Nile Valley, similar to the movement of the sun.²³⁰ Likewise, sycamores can symbolize the birth of sun, such as in PT 568, where “...This king has grasped for himself the two sycamore trees which are yonder side of the sky: ‘Ferry me over’ and they set him on yonder eastern side of the sky.”²³¹ Two spells from the Coffin Texts also discussed sycamores as marking the birth place of the sun god, with the former reading, “...I am he who rows and does not tire in the bark of Re; I know those two sycamores which are of turquoise between which Re goes forth, which go strewing shade at every eastern gate from

²²⁴ E. Drioton, “Review of Adriaan De Buck, A. *The Egyptian Coffin Texts VI. Texts of Spells 472-786*,” *BiOr* XV.5 (1958): 187-190.

²²⁵ E. Naville, *The Xith Dynasty Temple at Deir el-Bahari I-II* (London; Boston: EEF, 1907, 1910); Chr. Desroches-Noblecourt and Ch. Kuentz, *Le petit temple d'Abou Simbel* (Cairo: Ministry of Culture, 1968); Bleeker, *Hathor*, 31.

²²⁶ E. Naville, *The Temple of Deir el-Bahari*, IV (EEF Memoir 16; London; Boston: EEF, 1901), pl. LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, LXXXIX, XC, XCI, XCIV, XCVI, CIV, CV.

²²⁷ Naville, *Todtenbuch* I, pl. CLXVII; Bonnet, *Reallexikon*, 402.

²²⁸ Bleeker, *Hathor*, 36-37; Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 469.

²²⁹ PT §§ 699, 916b, 1433b, and 1485a; and discussion of S. Allam, *Beiträge zum Hathorkult (bis zum Ende des mittleren Reiches)* (MÄS 4; Berlin: B. Hessling, 1963), 108-109.

²³⁰ B. Lesko, *The Great Goddesses of Egypt* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 84-87.

²³¹ Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, 221-2.

which Re shines forth...”.²³² Hathor as a nursing tree goddess appeared in the tomb decoration from the Pyramid Texts, Coffin Texts, and New Kingdom tomb decoration.²³³ In the Book of the Dead the deceased prided himself on the fact that he is seated in the shadow of Hathor's sycamore and may enjoy his meals there.²³⁴

Hathor's identity as a sky goddess,²³⁵ explicitly called *Nbt nt pt*²³⁶ is associated with solar birth. In the Coffin Texts, Hathor assisted the deceased in climbing to the sky. For example, CT 300 stated,²³⁷ "...I have climbed up the sunbeams, O Hathor give me your hand ascending to the sky..." Likewise, the deceased invoked Hathor to "reach me your hand, (so that) you take me up to the sky."²³⁸ Related to this role was another title, *Nbt nt zht* "Lady of the horizon",²³⁹ and her connection to the *sbz n pt* "door to the sky."²⁴⁰

Separate from these other functions, Hathor still was highly associated with rebirth. The Coffin Texts highlighted this connection, "Hathor has anointed him, she will give him life in the West (realm of the dead), like Re, daily."²⁴¹ A number of other spells from the Coffin Texts claimed the deceased as part of the retinue of this goddess to guarantee her favor.²⁴² Similarly, the title from a spell in the Book of the Dead read, "Spell to be in the retinue of Hathor."²⁴³

²³² Faulkner, *CT I*, 137-138 (*CT 159*), 139-140 (*CT 161*).

²³³ Allam, *Beiträge zum Hathorkult*, 106-7; R. Mofrah, "Die uralte Sykomore andere Erscheinungen der Hathor," *ZÄS* 92 (1965): 40-47; R. Faulkner, *Book of the Dead* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972), 67-68 (Spell 59).

²³⁴ Bleeker, *Hathor*, 37, citing Spells 52:2; 68: 10; 82: 5/6.

²³⁵ *CT IV*, 177j-178a; also discussion in Allam, *Beiträge*, 99-103.

²³⁶ Ex: Faulkner, *Coffin Texts II*, 240 (Spell 670).

²³⁷ Faulkner, *Coffin Texts I*, 221.

²³⁸ *CT V*, 159 cd and *IV*, 52.

²³⁹ Ex: Faulkner, *Coffin Texts I*, 207-208 (Spell 276).

²⁴⁰ Spell 44: Faulkner, *Coffin Texts I*, 35.

²⁴¹ Maria Münster, *Untersuchungen zur Göttin Isis, vom alten Reich bis zum Ende des neuen Reiches* (Berlin: B. Hessling, 1968), 40.

²⁴² *CT VI* 62e; *CT VI* 135u; *CT IV* 172a, b, h.

²⁴³ Bleeker, *Hathor*, 44, quoting BD Spell 103.

Hathor was likewise highly associated with fertility. One of her epithets was *nb.t ḥtp.t*, Mistress of the Vulva.²⁴⁴ Indeed, excavators found items like wooden phalli Hathor's sanctuary at Deir el-Bahari.²⁴⁵ As we will later discuss,²⁴⁶ Hathor occurred in the medical-magical spells both during labor and the post-birth period. The theme also recurred in hymns to the goddess, such as that from the temple of Medinet Habu:²⁴⁷

"May you celebrate festivals for the great god who is in the Mound of Djeme, and may your wives celebrate for Hathor, mistress of the West, with the result that she cause that they bear for you men and women (scil. boys and girls)..."

Given all these various associations, interpretation of her appearances in material culture would have to focus on the context. Objects found in domestic locations and possibly temples would thus be more likely to invoke the goddess in her fertility role, as well as objects found in association with other birth deities like Aha/Bes and Ipet/Taweret. However, given the presence of known birth-related material in tombs,²⁴⁸ a funerary context would not exclude a possible application in birth and fertility.

2.3.1 Middle Kingdom-Second Intermediate Period Objects

Private-owned objects with depictions of Hathor were relatively few during this period. She appeared in a Middle Kingdom figurine from Lisht North.²⁴⁹ It is a one-side pottery head fragment (Figure 25), with the goddess possessing cow ears and traces of black paint for the curled wig and red for skin. A few amulets of her from cemeteries in Rifeh²⁵⁰ and the Qau

²⁴⁴ *Wb.* III, 195.

²⁴⁵ G. D. Hornblower, "Phallic Offerings to Hathor," *Man* 26 (May 1926): 8-12; Bonnet, *Reallexikon*, 277-282: "Hathor"; Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 235-245.

²⁴⁶ In § 5.2.4.3 and references herein; in § 5.2.4.4.

²⁴⁷ J. Darnell, "Hathor Returns to Medamūd," *SAK* 22 (1995): 57.

²⁴⁸ For example, see the wands below, §4.3.

²⁴⁹ MMA 22.1.1965: Assessed from museum online catalogue 7/15/2016.

²⁵⁰ UC38934, 38838, 38939a-b: Assessed from museum online catalogue 7/15/2016.

region,²⁵¹ which depict her with a scroll wig and podium headdress,²⁵² also occur. Interestingly, one example is a Second Intermediate Period necklace which also had a Aha/Bes amulet in addition to the two Hathor amulets.²⁵³ Excavations of various tombs also found Hathor-headed seals (Figure 24).²⁵⁴ Stelae include those from Sinai²⁵⁵ and Gebelein.²⁵⁶ During this period, stelae depicting Hathor tended to occur in temples to Hathor and either were funerary or requested general favor during life.²⁵⁷

Likely due to rules of decorum, the bulk of objects directly depicting the goddess during the Middle Kingdom were dedication stelae and funerary material. Indeed, she did not occur on apotropaia of the Late Middle Kingdom to early New Kingdom.²⁵⁸ However, the Abydos birth brick, Type A nude figurines, and cowrie-shell jewelry prove that she had her fertility and birth role during this period.²⁵⁹

²⁵¹ U. Dubiel, *Amulette, Siegel, und Perlen: Studien zu Typologie und Tragesitte im Alten und Mittleren Reich*. (OBO 229. Fribourg: Academic Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 84.

²⁵² With exception of Hathor cow amulet UC38934.

²⁵³ UC38838.

²⁵⁴ Ex: M. Stoof, "Siegelamulette in den Grabern von Mostagedda (Mittelagypen)," *Halleschen Beitrage zur Orientwissenschaft* 21 (1996): 71, 74; Ibid., "Hathorkopf-Stempelsiegelamulette," *Hallesche Beitrage zur Orientwissenschaft* 28 (1999): 46-55.

²⁵⁵ Brussels E.03084-6: Assessed from online museum catalogue 7/15/2016.

²⁵⁶ Turin S. 12386 RCGE 18029: Assessed from online museum catalogue 7/15/2016.

²⁵⁷ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 98-101.

²⁵⁸ See below, Chapter 4.

²⁵⁹ See below, §§ 3.2.1, 4.2, and 7.2.1.

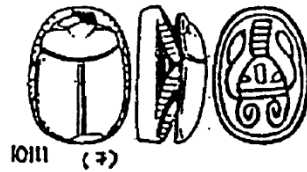


Figure 24 – Scarab from Mostagedda with face of Hathor, 1.FIP-MK. Image from Stoof, “Mostagedda,” 74.
Figure 25 - MMA 22.1.1965. Image from assessed from museum online catalogue.

Table 3 – Hathor Amulets from MK-SIP

Region	Site	Location	Date	Material	Details
UE	Mostagedda	Tomb 10111 (F), on neck	1.FIP-MK	steatite	scarab; Hathor head ²⁶⁰
ME	Gurob ²⁶¹		MK	steatite	scarab; underside with remains of motif of Hathor symbol within border of round coil spirals and tendrils
ME	Deir el Bersha ²⁶²	Tomb 10, in front of tomb	12D.	faience	scarab, dark blue; Hathor-head on standard between two uraei
UE	Abydos ²⁶³		MK	steatite	Hathor-head
UE	Abydos ²⁶⁴		15D.	steatite	scarab; Hathor headed sistrum
UE	Riqqeh ²⁶⁵		15D.	steatite	scarab; Hathor headed sistrum and 'anra'-signs

²⁶⁰ Stoof, "Siegelamulette in den Grabern von Mostagedda," 71, 74.

²⁶¹ UC7980: Assessed from museum online catalogue 7/15/2016.

²⁶² MFA 21.382: Assessed from museum online catalogue 7/15/2016.

²⁶³ Liverpool 1977.109.14: Bienkowski and Southworth, *Egyptian antiquities*, 5.

²⁶⁴ Brussels E.04405c: Assessed from museum online catalogue 7/15/2016.

²⁶⁵ Brussels E.02107: Assessed from museum online catalogue 7/15/2016.

2.3.2 New Kingdom Objects

Objects depicting Hathor became more popular during this period. These took the form of amulets and seals, figurines, and other objects. Importantly, they more often occurred in domestic contexts than previously, which more likely indicated her fertility and birth roles.

Amulets featuring Hathor came in three forms: the Hathor-head (Figure 26), cow, and human form. Excavators found molds of these amulets in towns such as Amarna and Qantir.²⁶⁶ The former, typically her cow ears, a podium headdress, and scroll wig, was much more widely attested, and mostly occurred in faience. This type occurred in large numbers at Amarna,²⁶⁷ and appeared in various sites such as Buhen,²⁶⁸ Faras,²⁶⁹ Semna,²⁷⁰ Deir el-Bahari,²⁷¹ Naqada,²⁷² Saqqara,²⁷³ and some Syro-Palestinian sites.²⁷⁴ Some, with long necks, were shaped more as a sistrum,²⁷⁵ while a few others depicted the head on a *nb*-basket.²⁷⁶ Also, they appeared in

²⁶⁶ Petrie, *Tell el Amarna*, pl. XVII, type 280-1; R. Khawam, "Un ensemble de moules en terre-cuite de la 19e dynastie." *BIFAO* 70 (1971): pl. XXXIV: 10, 17, XXXIII: 15, 18-19; C. Herrmann, *Formen für ägyptische Fayencen: Katalog der Sammlung des Biblischen Instituts der Universität Freiberg Schweiz und einer Privatsammlung Formen für ägyptische Fayencen aus Qantir* (Fribourg: Academic Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985), Cat. 92-93, 141-161; *Ibid.*, *Formen II* (Fribourg: Academic Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), Cat. 26-37, 85-91; *Ibid.*, "Weitere Formen für ägyptische Fayencen aus der Ramsesstadt: Katalog der Model der Ausgrabungskampagne 1988 des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts Zweigstelle Kairo in Tell el Dab'a und Qantir," *Ägypten und Levante* 1 (1990): Cat. 15-16, 38-41.

²⁶⁷ *CoA* I, 17, 28; *CoA* II, 82-5, 87-8, 90-2, 94-6; *CoA* III, 82, 102, 105, 111, 126; Borchardt and Rieke, *Wohnhäuser*, 73, 75, 86, 90, 113, 122, 178, 180-1, 206; Boyce, "Collar and necklace designs at Amarna," 65; Stevens, *Private religion*, 54-55.

²⁶⁸ Randall-MacIver and Woolley, *Buhen*, 221, pl. 55.

²⁶⁹ Pinch, *Votive offerings to Hathor*, 141.

²⁷⁰ D. Dunham, *Second cataract forts. Excavated by George Andrew Reisner I* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1960).

²⁷¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 142-3.

²⁷² W. M. F. Petrie, *Naqada and Ballas 1895* (BSAE 1; London: B. Quaritch, 1896), 48, Pl. LXIV, 94.

²⁷³ N. Kanawati, *Excavations at Saqqara : north-west of Teti's Pyramid* (Warminster: Ari & Phillips, 1984), 66.

²⁷⁴ Ex: J. Price, *Masterpieces of Ancient Jewelry* (Philadelphia: Running Press, 2008), 56 (Deir el-Balah); O. Tufnell, *Lachish II: The Fosse Temple* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940), L.II pl.XXI.46.

²⁷⁵ Ex: M. Hamza, "Excavations of the department of Antiquities at Qantir (Faqus District) Season May 21 - July 7, 1928," *ASAE* 30 (1930): Pl. IV:A; Kanawati, *Excavations at Saqqara*, 66 (Grav S84.232); Herrmann, *Formen II*, Cat. 31-32.

²⁷⁶ Ex: Petrie, *Tell el Amarna*, 25.

necklaces,²⁷⁷ including those with Bes and Taweret pendants.²⁷⁸ The evidence thus shows this variation was both popular and more likely to occur in domestic sites. Cow amulets, in contrast, mainly occurred in temple contexts,²⁷⁹ particularly Deir el-Bahari,²⁸⁰ and were either of glazed material or metal, namely copper or bronze. Given the role of the Hathor cow as a mainly funerary figure, the assessment of Pinch that the cow-form Hathor objects did not relate to her fertility role appears accurate.²⁸¹ They typically show her wearing a sun-disk, sometimes depicting her emerging from a papyrus thicket.²⁸² Human-bodied Hathor amulets, either with human head or leonine head, were less common, though they occurred in temples, tombs, and town sites.²⁸³ Given the context of the amulets, Egyptian appeared to have considered those with at least some humanoid features appropriate for Hathoric birth magic, in contrast to the funerary cow.

A number of Hathor seals also occurred during this period, though mainly in temples²⁸⁴ and tombs.²⁸⁵ Her head occurs on the back of scarabs (Figure 27),²⁸⁶ though she can also occur as

²⁷⁷ Ex: G. Brunton, *British Museum expedition to Middle Egypt, 1929-1931. Matmar* (London: B. Quaritch, 1948), pl. XLVIII, no.6; Price, *Masterpieces of Ancient Jewelry* (Philadelphia: Running Press, 2008), 56.

²⁷⁸ UC 73973; Petrie, *Tell el Amarna*, pl. XVII, 280, 288, 290-1, 299; XVIII, 358; CoA II, pl. L (LV); Kanawati, *Excavations at Saqqara*, 66.

²⁷⁹ With exception of Petrie, *Tell el Amarna*, pl. XVII, 303; J. Samson, *Amarna, city of Akhenaten and Nefertiti: Nefertiti as pharaoh* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1978), 83, pl. 47(ii).

²⁸⁰ Pinch, *Votive offerings to Hathor*, 163-8, pls. 1-2, 6, 35c-d, 37, 37A.

²⁸¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 172-183.

²⁸² Ex: Brussels E.02492 (Assessed from online museum catalogue 6/1/2016.)

²⁸³ W. M. F. Petrie, *Denderah, 1898* (Memoir of the Egypt Exploration Society 17. London; Boston: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1900), 28, pl. 23.16; A. Rowe, *The four Canaanite temples of Beth-Shan I* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1940), pl. 34.72; Dunham, *Second cataract forts I*; Kanawati, *Excavations at Saqqara*, 66 (Grave S84.156).

²⁸⁴ Ex: F. Griffith, "Oxford excavations in Nubia," AAA 8. No. 3-4 (1921): pl. XIX 61; J. Karkowski, *The pharaonic inscriptions from Faras* (Faras V; Warszawa, 1981), 102 no. 55(1) pl. VII; Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 151 (BM EA51346).

²⁸⁵ Ex: Thomas, *Gurob*, Cat. 616-8, pl. 31; G. Brunton, *Mostagedda and the Tasian Culture* (London: B. Quaritch, 1937), pl. LXXXVIII 8; Martin, *Royal Tomb at El-Amarna I*, 81 cat. 296, pl. 51

²⁸⁶ Ex: Thomas, *Gurob*, Cat. 616-8, pl. 31; Fitz. E.GA.6045.1943; Samson, *Amarna: City of Akhenaten and Nefertiti*, 85-86.

Hathor-headed seals (Figure 28).²⁸⁷ These seals, similar to many amulet types, may have originally served the owner in life prior to deposition, so their location in temples and tombs does not necessarily preclude a domestic function.

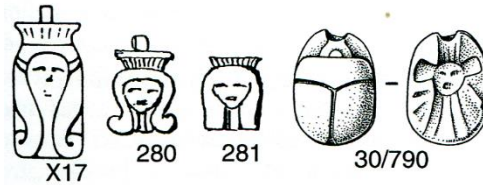


Figure 26 – Various Hathor amulets from Amarna. Image from Stevens, *Private religion*, fig. II.2.4.

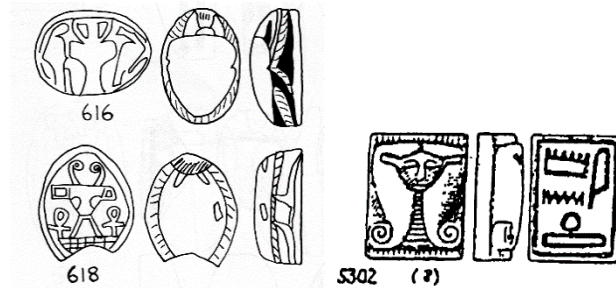


Figure 27 (left) - NK scarabs with head of Hathor. Image from Thomas, *Gurob*, Cat. 616 and 618, pl.31.

Figure 28 (right) – Hathor-headed seal, Mostagedda Tomb 5302, 18th Dynasty. Image from Stoof, “Mostagedda,” 78.

Hathor figurines likewise appeared during the New Kingdom (Table 4). Excavators found most of these in Hathor temples, particularly Deir el-Bahari (Figure 29), though they also occurred in some graves as well as at Amarna. They came in the form of Hathor cows,²⁸⁸ human-bodied Hathor,²⁸⁹ a head on a lotus capital,²⁹⁰ as well as a so-called “Hathor-Astarte.”²⁹¹ The

²⁸⁷ Ex: CoA II, 101; pl. XLVII, 4 a & b; Stoof, “Siegelamulette in den Grabern von Mostagedda,” Cat. 7, 16, 21, 23, 31, 34, 37.

²⁸⁸ Ex: Pinch, *Votive offerings to Hathor*, 160.

²⁸⁹ Ex: MFA 97.914.

²⁹⁰ Griffith, *Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities*, 53.

²⁹¹ Bienkowski and Southworth, *Egyptian antiquities*, 19.

latter was the only form that appears clearly domestic, and it reflects the cultural exchange between Canaanite and Egyptian domestic religious practices.²⁹²

Table 4 – NK Figurines of Hathor

Region	Site	Specifics	Date	Material	Details	Bibliography
UE	Deir el Bahari		NK	Faience	Hathor cow; black spots; body fragment and head	MFA 97.914: Assessed from museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.
UE	Deir el Bahari		18D.	Pottery	Hathor figure; schematically modeled, features applied; scroll wig; traces of black for wig and white for body (slip); head fragment	MFA 05.249: Assessed from museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.
UE	Deir el Bahari		NK	Faience	Hathor cow; fragment of legs and back	MFA 97.915: Assessed from museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.
UE	Deir el Bahari	Temple of Mentuhotep	18D.	Faience	Hathor cow; somewhat stylized; black painted circles for hide; bored hole for eye; head fragment	MFA 05.247: Assessed from museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.
UE	Deir el Bahari		18D.	Faience	Hathor figure; head fragment	Chicago OI E 8458: Assessed from museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.
UE	Deir el Bahari		m.18D.	Faience	Hathor figure; face	MMA 05.4.118: Assessed from museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.
UE	Deir el Bahari	Temple of Hatshepsut, Hathor Chapel	m.18D.	Faience	Hathor figure; bust	MMA 07.230.32: Assessed from museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.

²⁹² See B. A. Nakhai, “Plaque Figurines and the Relationship between Canaanite and Egyptian Women in Late Bronze II,” in *Celebrate Her for the Fruit of Her Hands: Studies in Honor of Carol L. Meyers*, eds. S. Ackerman, C. Carter and B. Alpert Nakhai (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns., 2015), 333-362, esp. 340-2 and 344-9.

UE	Deir el Bahari		1.NK	Faience	Hathor cow; head fragment	Fitz. E.28.1937: Pinch, <i>Votive offerings to Hathor</i> , 160.
UE	Deir el Bahari		18D.	Limestone	Hathor cow; well modelled; head and body fragment; traces of yellow paint	Brussels E.02517: Assessed from museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.
UE	Dendera		18D.	Faience	Hathor figure; frontal Hathor head both sides; head fragment	Philadelphia E3893.1: Assessed from museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.
UE	Dendera		18D.	Faience	Hathor figure; frontal Hathor head one side; head fragment	Philadelphia E3893.2: Assessed from museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.
UE	Esna	Grave 251	1.18-22D.	Limestone	"figure of Hathor"	Liverpool: Downes, <i>Esna</i> , tomb registry.
ME	Amarna		1.18D.	Terracotta	Hathor-Astarte	Liverpool 56.21.627: Bienkowski and Southworth, <i>Egyptian antiquities</i> , 19.
ME	Amarna		1.18D.	Terracotta	Hathor-Astarte, lower part	Liverpool 56.21.843: Bienkowski and Southworth, <i>Egyptian antiquities</i> , 19.
ME	Amarna		1.18D.	Terracotta	Hathor-Astarte, upper part	Liverpool 56.21.844: Bienkowski and Southworth, <i>Egyptian antiquities</i> , 19.
ME	Amarna		1.18D.	Terracotta	Hathor-Astarte, white slip	Liverpool 56.21.713: Bienkowski and Southworth, <i>Egyptian antiquities</i> , 19.
ME	Gurob		18-19D.	Wood	Hathor head on lotus capital, with incised line decoration filled with traces of blue pigment	Manchester 577: A. S. Griffith, <i>Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities of the XII and XVIII Dynasties from</i>

						<i>Kahun, Illahun and Gurob</i> (Manchester : Sherratt & Hughes, 1910), 53.
Sinai	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Temple	NK	Faience	Hathor figure; black outline; head fragment	MFA 05.178: Assessed from museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.



Figure 29 – Pottery figurine head of Hathor MFA 05.249, Deir el-Bahari, 18th Dynasty. Image from MFA online catalogue (accessed 1/15/2020).

She likewise occurred in other objects. Some of the stelae with her image, both as human and as a cow, came from town sites such as Deir el-Medina,²⁹³ and Memphis (Figure 30).²⁹⁴ Relatively few of the stelae related a birth-specific function, though Turin 1658 from Deir el-Medina used her title “Mistress of the Vulva.”²⁹⁵ In addition, several figured ostraca from Deir el-Medina (Figure 31) depicted heads of Hathor.²⁹⁶

²⁹³ Turin 1658 RCGE 5732: Assessed from online museum catalogue 7/1/2016.

²⁹⁴ W. M. F. Petrie, *Memphis I* (BSAE 15; London: School of Archaeology in Egypt, University College, 1909), pl. xxviii.21-22.

²⁹⁵ Tosi and Roccati, *Stele e altre Epigrafi di Deir el Medina*, Cat. 50027, pl. 271. For meaning of “Mistress of the Vulva” epithet, see above, § 2.3.

²⁹⁶ Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue II*, Cat. 2645-9, pl. LXXXV.

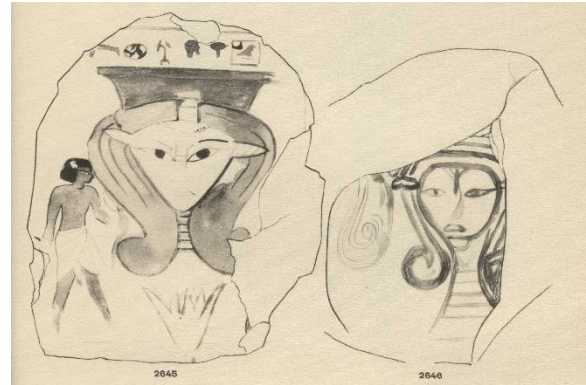
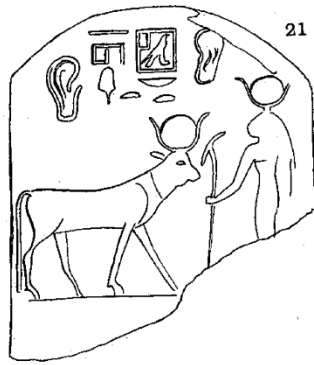


Figure 30 - Hathor stela from Memphis, New Kingdom. Image from Petrie, *Memphis I*, pl. 28.21.

Figure 31 – Ostraca with Hathor from Deir el-Medina. Image from Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue II*, pl. LXXXV.

2.3.3 Conclusions

Given the various roles of this goddess, and that many of the objects bearing her image came from tombs, a possible fertility function for many of the objects described above remains uncertain. Her popularity in material culture, like those of many of the other deities in this chapter, rose during the New Kingdom. Nevertheless, the record indicates that her association with fertility was longstanding during the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom, as seen in the imagery of the Abydos birth brick²⁹⁷ and the wigs of Middle Kingdom through Second Intermediate Period female figurines.²⁹⁸

In contrast to the New Kingdom, the Middle Kingdom tended to have less direct depictions of Hathor in birth objects. The few private objects from this period tended to show the frontal Hathoric head with cow ears. With the advent of the New Kingdom, previous restrictions on her direct appearance in daily-life material was somewhat lifted. Likewise, there appeared to have been some specialization of her various forms. Specifically, domestic objects depicted her

²⁹⁷ See below, § 7.2.1.

²⁹⁸ See below, § 3.2.1.2.

with at least some humanoid features in amulets, while known household figurines depicted a “Hathor-Astarte” variation.

Like Hathor, the representation of the frog-goddess Heqet remained consistent from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom. Like the Hathoric material, objects depicting frogs did not necessarily symbolize birth. Interestingly, while Hathor as a birth goddess in the Middle Kingdom was evoked on the Abydos birth brick and in cowrie shells, Heqet occurred on apotropaia of the same period.

2.4 Heqet

As discussed above, the frog goddess Heqet occurred in the Westcar Papyrus as one of the four goddesses who assisted Renenutet in giving birth to the three kings. The frog/toad²⁹⁹ predominantly occurred in amulets and figurines, first appearing in significant numbers in the Late Old Kingdom.³⁰⁰ However, since Egyptians also represented the deities of the Ogdoad as frogs, there is uncertainty whether such images signified Heqet.

Textual and archaeological evidence indicates that her original cult was likely in the Hermopolitan nome.³⁰¹ Worship of the goddess was already present in the Old Kingdom, as recorded in tomb autobiographies.³⁰² One of the spells from Pepi I’s version of the Pyramid


²⁹⁹ Egyptians did not always distinguish between the two amphibians. See F. Egger, “Frosch und Kröte bei den alten Ägyptern,” *Mitt. Geogr.-Ethnol. Ges. Basel* 4 (1931): 16; H. W. Müller, *Werke altägyptischer und koptischer Kunst; Die Sammlung Wilhelm Esch, Duisburg* (Munich: 1961), 17; E. Komorzunski, “Eine altägyptische Frosch- oder Krötenfigur,” *AfO* 20 (1963): 144.

³⁰⁰ Andrews, *Amulets of ancient Egypt*, 63.

³⁰¹ A. Gardiner, “Davies’s Copy of the Great Speos Artemidos Inscription,” *JEA* 32 (1946): 47; G. Roeder, *Hermopolis 1929-1939* (Hildesheim, Verlag Gebrüder Gerstenberg, 1959), 184.

³⁰² W. Helck, *Untersuchungen zu den Beamtentiteln des ägyptischen alten Reiches* (Ägyptologische Forschungen 18; Glückstadt, New York, J. J. Augustin, 1954), 48, 121. See also L. Borchardt, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches (ausser den Statuen) im Museum von Kairo No. 1295-1808, Teil II: Text und Tafeln zu No. 1542-1808* (Cairo: Organisme Général des Imprimeries Gouvernementales, 1964), 54; N. Strudwick, *The Administration of Egypt in the Old Kingdom: The Highest Titles and their Holders* (London: KPI, 1985), 184-5.

Texts invoked her as part of a limb deification.³⁰³ The Coffin Texts discussed frog goddesses as creator deities.³⁰⁴ Likewise, another spell of the same texts considered her the “mother” of Re:³⁰⁵

“The Ennead conduct to him the frog-goddesses () who bore Re.” Another line in the same text read similarly, “I am the Great one, whom Heqet has created.”³⁰⁶ In Papyrus Westcar,³⁰⁷ her role was to hasten the birth of the three princes. As we will discuss below,³⁰⁸ Heqet appeared in the New Kingdom royal birth myths of Hatshepsut, giving life to the body and *kꜣ* of the royal infant on Khnum’s potter’s wheel. In the funerary realm, she also occurred in scenes of the funeral of Osiris in the temple of Dendera beside the coffin.³⁰⁹

The gods of the Ogdoad likewise occurred early in Egyptian religion and held their cult place in Hermopolis. In the Pyramid Texts, one spell invoked two of the four pairs of deities,³¹⁰ while a spell from the pyramid of Neith summoned all eight.³¹¹ Several spells from the Coffin Texts invoked them as gods from before creation.³¹² The Ogdoad consisted of four male-female pairs: Nun and Naunet of the Primeval waters, Amun and Amunet representing invisibility,³¹³ Kek and Keket of primeval darkness, and Heh and Hehet of spatial endlessness. While these gods can have human forms,³¹⁴ the male sometimes had frog or jackal heads and the females

³⁰³ P 486 (PT 539): J. P. Allen, *The ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (Writings from the ancient world 23; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 169-171.

³⁰⁴ CT III, 372a; CT IV, 122d.

³⁰⁵ CT III, 371.

³⁰⁶ CT III, [175] 61d.

³⁰⁷ See below, § 5.4.

³⁰⁸ See § 7.3.2.

³⁰⁹ S. Cauville, *Le temple de Dendara: les chapelles osiriennes* X, 2 (Cairo, IFAO, 1997), pl. X 103 and 253.

³¹⁰ PT Sp. 301 (§ 446-7; W 206 in Allen, *Pyramid Texts*, 55).


³¹¹ Nt 7 (PT 585): Allen, *Pyramid Texts*, 312.

³¹² CT I, 76.78-80.

³¹³ Sometimes Tenem/Tenemet, Gereh/Gerehet, Nia/Niat. For more information, see S. T. Hollis, “Otiose deities and the ancient Egyptian pantheon,” *JARCE* 35 (1998): 66, n. 45.

³¹⁴ Ex: L. Lesko, “Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies and Cosmology,” in *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. B. Shafer (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), fig. 54 (Room 5, Khonsu Temple, Karnak).

snake heads.³¹⁵ In myth,³¹⁶ they created the place (Primeval Mound or Island of Flame) or the object (Primeval Lotus or Cosmic Egg) from which the creator sun god emerged. Members of the Ogdoad such as Nun and Naunet and Heh and Hehet also aided the sun god be reborn each morning.³¹⁷

Whether as the male gods of the Ogdoad or Heqet, frogs represented regeneration and fecundity in ancient Egyptian symbolism.³¹⁸ The frog likely received these attributes due to its chthonic nature as a being associated with the Nile.³¹⁹ Coffin Texts Spell 321 confirmed this link between the frog and the Nile flood, namely when the deceased stated, "[...] I am the Nile-god, wide-spread of vision, who made the gods; Sovereign, of the frog-goddesses; august god, mysterious of [...]."³²⁰ Thus, since the New Kingdom, the writing of the phrase  *whm ḥnh* "repeating life,"³²¹ typically written after a person's name, included the image of the frog.³²²

Much of the previous scholarship surrounding frog amulets assumed that, due to Heqet's

³¹⁵ Ex: G. Pinch, *Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), fig. 37 (Book of the Fayum).

³¹⁶ R. A. Parker and L. Lesko, "The Khonsu Cosmogony," in *Pyramid studies and other essays presented to I.E.S. Edwards*, ed. J. Baines (London: EES, 1988), 168-175; Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature I*, 51-7; H. Beinlich, *Das Buch vom Fayum: zum religiösen Eigenverständnis einer ägyptischen Landschaft* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991); J. L. Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs: an anthology of ancient Egyptian lyric poetry* (Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 1996), 69-79; Lévêque, *Grenouilles*, 54-55, ft. 3-4.

³¹⁷ E. Hornung, *Das Amduat Die Schrift des verborgenen Raumes* (ÄA 7, 13; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1963-67), 12th hour, no. 885-8.

³¹⁸ Andrews, *Amulets of ancient Egypt*, 10, 62-63; L. Kákosy, "Frosch," *LÄ II* (1977): 334-6.

³¹⁹ Bonnet, *Reallexikon*, 6; Kákosy, "Frosch," 335; Kolta, "Ei, Hase, und Frosch," 277; J. Leclant, "La grenouille d'éternité des pays du Nil au monde méditerranéen," *Hommages à Maarten J. Vermaseren*, II (Leiden, 1978), 568; Lévêque, *Grenouilles*, 55-56; F. Servajean, "Du singulier à l'universel: le Potamogeton dans les scènes cynégétiques des marais," *Encyclopédie religieuse de l'Univers végétal: Croyances phytoreligieuses de l'Égypte ancienne* 1, ed. S. Aufrère (Montpellier: Université Paul-Valéry, 1999), 261.

³²⁰ Faulkner, *CT I*, 249; Le Men, "La grenouille," 89.

³²¹ *Wb. I*, 344, 3-4.

³²² H. Wild, "Statue de Hor-Néfer au Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lausanne," *BIFAO* 54 (1954): 176 and 209; A. H. Zayed, "Reflexions sur deux statuettes inédites de l'époque ptolémaïque," *ASAE* 57 (1962): 151 and 154; Hornung and Staehelin, *Skarabäen*, 112, n.89.

connection to divine conception and birth, that women wore these amulets for pregnancy and childbirth-related reasons.³²³ However, from the sample of 1477 graves dating from the Old through Middle Kingdom from the region of Qau,³²⁴ excavators found only 26 frog amulets (~2.5%) on the bodies of women and children.³²⁵ Thus, as Kremler had noted,³²⁶ one cannot always presume the frog signified Heqet.

2.4.1 Middle Kingdom Objects

During the Middle Kingdom, objects of frogs primarily occurred on amulets, figurines, and wands. In the latter, there is some evidence that the frog invoked was indeed Heqet. While the exact frog deity on the amulets and figurines may not be entirely certain, many of these Middle Kingdom frog images appear to have had a magical and protective function.³²⁷

Frog amulets during this period were as design-amulets (Figures 32 and 33), amuletic seals where the top was shaped as a full figure, and scaraboids. The frogs were usually simply modeled, sitting squat on the base. Most of those from this period with context came from tombs. In at least a couple cases, excavators found the frog amulets as part of necklaces,³²⁸ one of which also possessed an Aha amulet.³²⁹ While frog-shaped design-amulets were popular from the 6th to

³²³ Petrie, *Amulets*, 12; Andrews, *Amulets*, 63; A. Capel and G. Markoe, *Mistress of the House, mistress of heaven: Women in ancient Egypt* (Cincinnati: Cincinnati Art Museum, 1996), 70; P. Germond and J. Livet, *An Egyptian bestiary: animals in life and religion in the land of the pharaohs* (London; New York: Thames & Hudson, 2001), 174.

³²⁴ G. Brunton, *Qau and Badari I* (BSAE 44; London: British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1927); Ibid., *Qau and Badari II* (BSAE 45; London: British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1928); G. Brunton and G. Caton-Thompson, *The Badarian civilization and Pre-dynastic remains near Badari* (BSAE 46; London: British School of Archaeology in Egypt; Quaritch, 1928); Brunton, *Mostagedda*; Dubiel, *Amulette, Siegel und Perlen*, 15, 187.

³²⁵ Kremler, "On interpreting the meaning of amulets," 99.

³²⁶ Kremler, "On interpreting the meaning of amulets," 101.

³²⁷ Lobban, "Frogs," 158-9.

³²⁸ Manchester 5119.a; MFA 13.3613.

³²⁹ Manchester 5119.a.

12th Dynasty, the frog motif did not appear on the base of design-amulets.³³⁰ Since design-amulets sometimes occurred as the only amuletic device in a grave,³³¹ Kremler had hypothesized that this amulet type offered a more general protection than conventional amulets.³³² Since some design-amulets indicate evidence of ancient repair,³³³ Egyptians likely also wore these objects during life.³³⁴



Figure 32 – MK frog amulets from Hawara. Image from Petrie, *Amulets*, pl. II, Cat. 18e-f.

Figure 33 – Late 11th Dynasty frog amulet from Sheikh Farag. Image from Weise, *Anfänge*, Taf. 55, no. 1130.

Table 5 – MK Frog Amulets

Region	Site	Specifics	Date	Material	Details
N	Dakka	Tomb 101:249 ³³⁵	1.11D.	steatite (gr.)	back motif: two children
UE	Abydos	necklace, including amulets of Aha ³³⁶	12D.	faience (bl.)	frog, longitudinally pierced
UE	Abydos ³³⁷		MK	Steatite	pierced; base: maze design
UE	Abydos ³³⁸	Tomb V 21	1.12-13D.	lapis lazuli	frog, flat, schematic
UE	Esna	Grave 153	MK	faience (gr.)	"small green glazed frog" ³³⁹
UE	Esna	Grave 268	SIP		"small frog seal" ³⁴⁰

³³⁰ Hornung and Staehelin, *Skarabäen und andere Siegelamulette*, 112; A. Wiese, *Die Anfänge der ägyptischen Stempelsiegel-Amulette: eine typologische und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu den "Knopfsiegeln" und verwandten Objekten der 6. bis frühen 12. Dynastie* (Freiburg: Universität Freiburg Schweiz; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996.), 164; Dubiel, *Amulette*, 247.

³³¹ Wiese, *Anfänge*, 16-33.

³³² Kremler, "On interpreting the meaning of amulets," 101.

³³³ Brunton, *Qau and Badari I*, 58.

³³⁴ Kremler, "On interpreting the meaning of amulets," 101.

³³⁵ C.M. Firth, *Archaeological Survey of Nubia 1908-1909 IV: Report on the work of the season* (Cairo: National Printing Department, 1915), Taf. 41, 26; Wiese, *Anfänge*, Cat. 1129.

³³⁶ Manchester 5119.a: Assessed on museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.

³³⁷ BM EA54690: Assessed on museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.

³³⁸ MMA 04.18.36: Assessed on museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.

³³⁹ Downes, *Esna*, tomb list.

³⁴⁰ Downes, *Esna*, tomb list.

UE	Sheikh Farag	Tomb SF42 ³⁴¹	l.11D.	steatite	Back motif: two lizards
UE	Sheikh Farag	SF 41 ³⁴²	MK	steatite	frog, tiny, large eyes
UE	Sheikh Farag	SF 43, necklace ³⁴³	MK	green stone	frog, tiny, schematic
ME	Hawara ³⁴⁴		12D.	limestone	frog, simply modeled
ME	Hawara ³⁴⁵		12D.	limestone	scroll and wꜣs on base
LE	Lisht North	south of pyramid below House A1:2, Pit 884 ³⁴⁶	l.12-13D.	lapis lazuli	frog, tiny, schematic
LE	San el-Hagar		SIP	Steatite	pierced; base: hieroglyphs ³⁴⁷

Figurines of frogs (Figure 34), primarily in faience, also occurred during this period, as part of the trend of such figurines during the Middle Kingdom.³⁴⁸ A number of the figurines had black-painted decoration in the form of spots, and one possessed markings at the bottom of the base.³⁴⁹ These figurines, like the amulets of this period, occurred in tombs, though the former has more representation in the Fayum region.

Table 6 – MK Frog Figurines

Region	Site	Details	Date	Description
S.UE	Asasif ³⁵⁰	C37, Tomb 24, second sifting	MK-SIP	"hind half of an exquisitely made frog in glazed steatite"
S.UE	Esna ³⁵¹	Tomb 153	MK	considered a small find (u), not an amulet

³⁴¹ MFA 13.3807: S. D'Auria et al., *Mummies and magic: the funerary arts of ancient Egypt*. (Boston: MFA, 1988), 96f, no. 29e; Wiese, *Anfänge*, Cat. 1130.

³⁴² MFA 13.3596: Assessed on museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.

³⁴³ MFA 13.3613: Assessed on museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.

³⁴⁴ UC28159: Petrie, *Amulets*, Cat. 18e, pl. II.

³⁴⁵ UC28160: Petrie, *Amulets*, Cat. 18f, pl. II.

³⁴⁶ MMA 22.1.137: Assessed on museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.

³⁴⁷ BM EA52800: Assessed on museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.

³⁴⁸ For more on animal figurines in the Middle Kingdom, see below, §4.4.

³⁴⁹ G. Caton-Thompson and E. Gardner, *The desert Fayum* (London, 1934), pl. LXXXIV.5.

³⁵⁰ G. Carnarvon and H. Carter, *Five years' explorations at Thebes : a record of work done 1907-1911* (London: H. Frowde, 1912), 52 (no image).

³⁵¹ Downes, *Esna*, 106.

N.U.E	Rifeh ³⁵²	Tomb	12D.	dark blue faience, details in black glaze. Damage to left side of face, left front and back side of base.
F	Harageh ³⁵³	Cemetery B, Tomb 353	MK	"Pottery frog, blue, with black spots"
F	Lisht North ³⁵⁴	South of the pyramid, Pit 360	12D.	faience, with black spots, rather long tail curled at side of body
F	Lisht South ³⁵⁵	Pits of pyramid 3	12D.	squatting frog sitting on a low oval base, blue-glazed faience
F	Qasr-es-Sagha	Tomb 16 ³⁵⁶	m.12D.	limestone frog figurine on base. Bottom of base with unclear signs.
LE	Dahshur ³⁵⁷	shaft tomb 106	MK	faience, green glaze.
LE	Heliopolis ³⁵⁸	Tomb	12D.	faience, green glaze; details in brown paint



Figure 34 – MK Frog figurine from Heliopolis. Image from Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, Cat. 112b.

³⁵² UC38854: F. Morfisse and G. Andreu-Lanoë, *Sésostris III: pharaon de légende* (LDA 27; Dijon: Faton, 2014), 292, cat. 293.

³⁵³ R. Engelbach, *Harageh* (ERA 28; London: Quaritch, 1923), 12, pls. XIV.7, LXI.353 (tomb register); Bourriau, "Patterns of Change," 18.

³⁵⁴ MMA 22.1.1139: MMA excavations 1920-21; qtd. Miniaci, "Collapse," 119, n.57.

³⁵⁵ JE 63665: Arnold, *Pyramid Complex*, 62, pl. 75, no. 54.

³⁵⁶ Caton-Thompson, *The desert Fayum*, pl. LXXXIV.5.

³⁵⁷ M. Baba and K. Yazawa, "Burial Assemblages of the Late Middle Kingdom: Shaft-tombs in Dahshur North," in *The World of Middle Kingdom Egypt (2000-1550 BC): Contributions on archaeology, art, religion, and written sources I*, ed. G. Miniaci and W. Grajetzki (Middle Kingdom Studies 1; London: Golden House Publications, 2015), 20, fig. 23.5, pl. 11.

³⁵⁸ Fitz. E.278.1939: Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, no. 112b; P. Houlihan, *The animal world of the pharaohs* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1996), ix.

On the magic wands, the frog appeared either on a basket,³⁵⁹ on a divine standard,³⁶⁰ on a pedestal,³⁶¹ or without any base.³⁶² In one example from Lisht (Figure 36),³⁶³ the frog deity has a female human body dressed in a long feminine robe, which Altenmüller had interpreted as indicating that the frog figure on the tusks are all female.³⁶⁴ Indeed, the inscription on Copenhagen NM 7795 (Figure 35) by the frog, reading $\begin{bmatrix} \text{𓆎} \end{bmatrix} \Delta \text{O}$, indicates that this goddess was Heqet.³⁶⁵

Of the various depictions of frogs during the Middle Kingdom, the wands most clearly indicate they represented Heqet. Her depiction on the wands are iconographically similar to that on figurines and amulets of the same period, with one such amulet strung along with an Aha amulet. Besides the wands, the repaired design amulets, and necklace with frog and Aha amulets most likely had a daily-life function, indicating they depicted Heqet. However, the evidence from Qau and Badari discussed above indicate it is still unclear if all of these frogs represented Heqet in her birth-goddess role. Contra Kremler, the frog did not have to be on a basket to clearly represent Heqet.³⁶⁶

³⁵⁹ Berlin 6709, 9611, 14207; BM 18175, 24426, 28192; UC OdU 35/6A; MMA 15.3.951, 22.1.154, 32.1.231, 86.1.91; Moscow 6736; Firth, *Arch. Surv.* 26c; Manchester 1800 (Quibell, *Ramesseum*, pl. III.3).

³⁶⁰ Berlin 8176; BM 6177; UC OdU 36/8, 38/10.

³⁶¹ BM 24425; MMA 22.1.79; Baltimore WAG 71.510.

³⁶² Brussels E 2673, E 7063; Cambridge FM 40/1926; Baltimore 71.510; Cairo 9434; Copenhagen NM 7795, 12113; MMA 08.200.19, 48.105.1; Philadelphia 2194; Price Lot 883; Manchester 1801.

³⁶³ MMA 22.1.96.

³⁶⁴ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 169.

³⁶⁵ F. Legge, "The magic ivories of the Middle Empire," *PSBA* 27 (1905): pl. 3, fig. 48; P.E. Newberry, *Catalogue of the Mac Gregor Collection of Egyptian Antiquities* (London: Davy, 1922), 94, no. 715, pl. 13; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, Cat. no. 50; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. 5.

³⁶⁶ Kremler, "On interpreting the meaning of amulets," 94, 99-100.



Figure 35 – Copenhagen NM 7795, obverse. Image from Legge, “Magic ivories,” (1905), pl. 3, fig. 48.

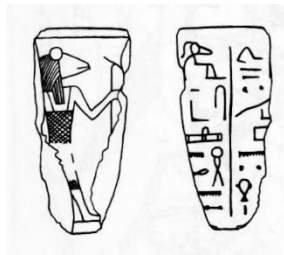


Figure 36 – MMA 22.1.96. Image from Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, Abb. 5.

2.4.2 New Kingdom Objects

New Kingdom depictions of frogs primarily occurred in scaraboid amulets, which appeared in large numbers during this time.³⁶⁷ Those amulets with context had a wide distribution, with 23 from Amarna (Figure 37),³⁶⁸ 15 from Abydos,³⁶⁹ 12 from Malkata,³⁷⁰ 1 from

³⁶⁷ W.C. Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt: A Background for the Study of the Egyptian Antiquities in the Metropolitan Museum of Art II* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 180; Lobban, “Frogs,” 159.

³⁶⁸ Petrie, *Tell el Amarna*, pl. XVII.328-9; Borchardt and Ricke, *Wohnhäuser*, 27; CoA III, 50; Samson, *City of Amarna*, 85-86, pl. 48(ii); Stevens, *Private religion*, 104.

³⁶⁹ BM EA 27997, 28051, 28148, 28411, 28356-7, 28923, 28953, 28358, 28961, 28944, 28958, 29026: Assessed on museum online catalogue 6/15/2016; Liverpool 24.9.00.83; Bienkowski and Southworth, *Egyptian antiquities*, 7.

³⁷⁰ MMA 11.215.34-7, 11.215.43, 11.215.47-9, 11.215.120-1: Assessed from museum online catalogue 6/15/2016.

Deir el-Bahari,³⁷¹ two from the Faras Hathor Temple,³⁷² and two from Sedment,³⁷³ as well as other sites. While most still derived from tombs,³⁷⁴ they also occurred in town sites and temples, which were more likely to depict Heqet. Excavators found a number of molds for such amulets in town sites.³⁷⁵ Most amulets were in faience or steatite, though there are examples in precious stones³⁷⁶ and metal.³⁷⁷ Most were the usual squatting frog on base, with some having red eyes.³⁷⁸ One interesting example from Amarna had the head of Hathor on the base.³⁷⁹ Besides as scaraboids, frogs in jewelry also occurred on the bezels of rings.³⁸⁰

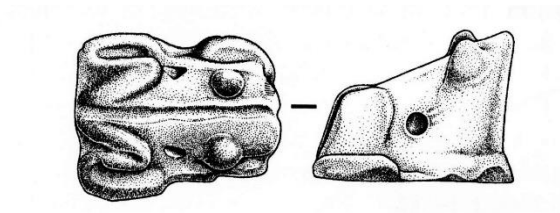


Figure 37 – NK frog amulet from Amarna. Image from Stevens, *Private Religion*, fig. II.3.22.

³⁷¹ B. Adams, *Egyptian objects in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, 3 (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips Ltd, 1977), 37.

³⁷² Pinch, *Offerings to Hathor*, 288.

³⁷³ Petrie and Brunton, *Sedment I*, 18-19; II, pl. 58.18.

³⁷⁴ Lobban, "Frogs," 159.

³⁷⁵ Amarna: Petrie, *Tell el Amarna*, pl XVII, 328-9; Qantir: Herrmann, *Formen I*, Cat. 100-102, 329-336; *ibid.* II, Cat. 99.

³⁷⁶ BM EA 63549; MFA 11.2743 (From Zawyet el-Aryan tomb Z 221: Assessed from online catalogue 6/15/2016); Chicago OI A 21138 (From Megiddo, Locus 3073A-C: Assessed from online catalogue 6/15/2016) Petrie and Brunton, *Sedment II*, pl. 58.18; UC27841: Thomas, *Gurob*, Cat. 286.

³⁷⁷ Ex: Philadelphia 31-27-169 (From Meydum, tomb 296: Assessed from online catalogue 6/15/2016); MFA 11.2648 (from Zawyet el-Aryan Grave Z 303: Assessed from online catalogue 6/15/2016).

³⁷⁸ Ex: BM EA 28357; MMA 11.215.43.

³⁷⁹ Fitzwilliam EGA.6045.1943: Samson, *Amarna: City of Akhenaten and Nefertiti*, 85-86.

³⁸⁰ Andrews, *Amulets of ancient Egypt*, 63. Ex: E.R. Ayrton et al., *Abydos III* (MEEF 25; London: EEF, 1904), pl. XVII, 3; BM 2923, 2928, 2929; Edinburgh 1883.49.2: C. Aldred, *Jewels of the pharaohs: Egyptian jewelry of the dynastic period* (New York: Praeger, 1971), pl. 69.

Frogs also occurred on certain vessels. For example, they featured on the lids of pseudo-vases that derive from burials of the 18th Dynasty (Figure 38).³⁸¹ They likewise appeared as the decor of ceremonial vessels.³⁸²



Figure 38 – Funerary vessel with frog figure on top, CG 51102. Image from Hayes, *Scepter II*, fig. 169.

Representations of frogs during the New Kingdom appear more likely to have invoked Heqet. Amulets of the animal occurred more often in temple and domestic contexts, while at least one figurine head of Hathor came from Amarna. The former appeared to have derived from the Middle Kingdom design-amulets, with inscriptions on the base. Similarly, the goddess also played a role in the royal birth scenes of the period.³⁸³ In contrast, the frogs depicted on vases invoked a funerary role,³⁸⁴ either of Heqet herself or the Ogdoad.

³⁸¹ CG 51102: Quibell, *Tomb of Yuua and Thuiu* (Cat. Gen.; Cairo 1908), 48, pl. XXIV; F.W. von Bissing, *Zeit und Herkunft der in Cerveteri gefundenen Gefäße aus ägyptischer Fayence und glasierten Ton* (SBAW 2.7; Munich: Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1941), 42, 75, and Taf. VIII.5; Hayes, *Scepter II*, 276 and fig. 169.

³⁸² H. Schäfer, *Die altägyptischen Prunkgefäße mit aufgesetzten Randverzierungen* (UGAÄ IV; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1903), Abb. 39, 89, and 112; W. M. F. Petrie, *Hyksos and Israelite Cities* (ERA 12; London: Office of School of Archaeology, 1906), 31f., pl. XXXII.

³⁸³ See below, § 7.3.2.

³⁸⁴ Contra Petrie, *Hyksos and Israelite Cities*, 32.

2.4.3 Conclusions

While frogs occurred in Egyptian art since the Old Kingdom and became popular in New Kingdom amulets, there is still uncertainty with most images of the animal whether it represented Heqet herself or some other frog deity associated with rebirth. Certain objects, namely the Middle Kingdom wands and objects from temple or town contexts are more likely to evoke this goddess. An expansion of allowed depiction, rather than a shift in Heqet's role, probably explains the increased presence of frog amulets during the New Kingdom, given the evidence from apotropaia and the birth story from Westcar Papyrus that she aided in childbirth in the Middle Kingdom. Frogs in both periods appear in association with lower-status individuals, with Middle Kingdom amulets commonly the only grave objects and a number of New Kingdom scaraboids from domestic areas. Through the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom, her form remained rather consistent. A similar pattern occurred with representations of Ipet/Taweret.

2.5 Ipet/Taweret

Called Ipy/Ipet³⁸⁵ or Reret³⁸⁶ prior to the New Kingdom, and Taweret "The Great" starting in the New Kingdom, this mixed hippopotamus-lion-crocodile deity shared much of the same history as that of Aha/Bes. Her earliest imagery, in the form of amulets, occurred in tombs of the Late Old Kingdom.³⁸⁷ Likewise, she was a standard figure on the Middle Kingdom wands and on New Kingdom furniture.

Her role as a divine nurse occurred as early as the Pyramid Texts, which referred to her as "Nurse of Heliopolis."³⁸⁸ She suckled the dead king,³⁸⁹ her milk serving as a protective liquid.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁵ *PT* Sp. 269 (§ 381a-382b); *Wb.* I 68,7-10.

³⁸⁶ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, I, 148; *Wb.* II 438,9-10.

³⁸⁷ Dubiel, *Amulette, Siegel, und Perlen*, 84.

³⁸⁸ *PT* §§ 207, 580, 823.

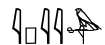

³⁸⁹ Faulkner, *PT*, §§ 381-382; Weingarten, *Transformation*, 10.

³⁹⁰ J. Leclant, "Le Rôle du lait et de l'allaitement d'après les textes des pyramides," *JNES* 10 (1951): 127.

Her association with hippos also occurred during this time, with another spell from the Pyramid Texts stating, “Greetings to you hippo.”³⁹¹ On two coffins from el-Bersha,³⁹² Ipet/Taweret appeared as a red-painted hippopotamus demon holding a broad knife and spoke of aiding Re in repelling Apophis and nursing the crew of Re’s solar barque.³⁹³ She thus served as one of the protective deities in the entourage of the sun god, a theme also seen in Middle Kingdom apotropaia.³⁹⁴ In the Book of the Dead, Taweret held a flame in one spell,³⁹⁵ while another referred to her as “Mistress of the magical protective forces.”³⁹⁶

2.5.1 Iconography of the Middle Kingdom

This section will discuss her imagery in figurines, amulets, wands, and other objects, as well as images of hippopotami. The oldest name of the goddess is *ʾp.t*, which may be the deity

 of the Pyramid Texts.³⁹⁷ For the Middle Kingdom, the inscription of an ivory tusk Copenhagen NM 7795, gives the name *Rr.t* “The Sow” for the goddess.³⁹⁸ In the Book of the Two Ways, depictions of the goddess label her *ʿšꜣt* or also .³⁹⁹

Figurines of Ipet/Taweret (Figure 39), often with a leonine mane, occurred primarily in the temple deposit of Byblos and town of Lahun. These contexts indicated her roles in both birth and rebirth. Most were of faience, with some in limestone. For this period, a variation of the

³⁹¹ *PT* § 522a.

³⁹² Cairo CG 28083 and CJE 37566: E. Brovarski, “Ahanakht of Bersheh and the Hare Nome in the First Intermediate Period and Middle Kingdom.” In *Studies in ancient Egypt, the Aegean, and the Sudan: Essays in honor of Dows Dunham on the occasion of his 90th birthday, June 1, 1980*, ed. W.K. Simpson et al. (Boston: MFA, 1981), 25-26; Weingarten, *Transformation*, 10.

³⁹³ Faulkner, *Coffin Texts* III, Spell 1179.

³⁹⁴ See Chapter 6, especially § 6.3.3.2.

³⁹⁵ *BD* 151: Naville, *Totenbuch*, Taf. 151. *BD* 185: N. Strudwick, *Masterpieces of Ancient Egypt* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 218-21.

³⁹⁶ *BD* 137B.

³⁹⁷ *PT* § 381.

³⁹⁸ Legge, “Magic ivories,” (1905), 301f., pl. 3-4, fig. 48; Newberry, *Catalogue of the Mac Gregor Collection*, 94, no. 715, pl. 13; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 148; *Apotropaia* II, 45-46, no. 50.

³⁹⁹ *CT* VIII, 517.

usual Ipet/Taweret is one where, instead of a back like that of a crocodile, her back was a whole crocodile (Figure 40).⁴⁰⁰ This occurred in several wands,⁴⁰¹ as well as figurines,⁴⁰² as well as a hairpin.⁴⁰³

Table 7 – MK Ipet/Taweret Figurines

Region	Site	Context	Date	Material	Notes
LE	Lisht North ⁴⁰⁴	Tomb	12-13D.	Limestone	simply shaped; flat feet, no details
LE	Lisht South ⁴⁰⁵	Burial of Hepy	e.12D.	Faience, paint	fully molded; standing on base, details painted in black
S-P.	Byblos ⁴⁰⁶	Temple deposit	MK-SIP	Faience	crocodile down back
S-P.	Byblos ⁴⁰⁷	Temple deposit	MK-SIP	Faience	crocodile down back
S-P.	Byblos ⁴⁰⁸	Temple deposit	MK-SIP	Faience	leonine face, dorsal ridge
S-P.	Byblos ⁴⁰⁹	Temple deposit	MK-SIP	Faience	dorsal ridge and perhaps ridge over nostrils
S-P.	Byblos ⁴¹⁰	Temple deposit	MK-SIP	Faience	dorsal ridge and perhaps ridge over nostrils
S-P.	Byblos ⁴¹¹	Temple deposit	MK-SIP	Faience	dorsal ridge and perhaps ridge over nostrils
S-P.	Byblos ⁴¹²	Temple deposit	MK-SIP	Faience	dorsal ridge and perhaps ridge over nostrils
S-P.	Byblos ⁴¹³	Temple deposit	MK-SIP	Faience	dorsal ridge and perhaps ridge over nostrils

⁴⁰⁰ S. Ceruti, "The Hippopotamus Goddess Carrying a Crocodile on her Back: an iconographical Motif distinctive of the Late Middle Kingdom," In *Company of Images: Modelling the Imaginary World of Middle Kingdom Egypt (2000-1500 BC): Proceedings of the International Conference of the EPOCHS Project held 18th-20th September 2014 at UCL, London*, ed. G. Miniaci et al. (Leuven: Peeters, OLA 262, 2017). 93-123.

⁴⁰¹ Louvre E 3614+MMA 26.7.1288a-b, MMA 30.8.218, and Basel BS Ae 991.

⁴⁰² Ceruti, "Hippopotamus Goddess," 102-3; A. el-Sawi, *Excavations at Tell Basta: report of seasons 1967-1971 and catalogue of finds* (Prague: Charles University, 1979), 77, figs. 177-9.

⁴⁰³ Ceruti, "Hippopotamus Goddess," fig. 8 (MMA 07.228.165).

⁴⁰⁴ W.C. Hayes, *Scepter I* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), 227.

⁴⁰⁵ Weingarten, *The Transformation of Egyptian Taweret*, pl. 14.

⁴⁰⁶ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos II*, pl. 102, no. 15156; Weingarten, *The Transformation of Egyptian Taweret*, 5-6, 8, pl. 16a-c; Ceruti, "Hippopotamus Goddesses," fig. 10.

⁴⁰⁷ Weingarten, *The Transformation of Egyptian Taweret*, 5-6, 8, pl. 16a-c.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Ibid.

S-P.	Byblos ⁴¹⁴	Temple deposit	MK-SIP	Faience	dorsal ridge and perhaps ridge over nostrils
LE	Tell Basta	Palace	L.MK	Limestone	crocodile on back ⁴¹⁵
ME	Lahun ⁴¹⁶		12D.	Faience	simply modelled; lion-head, wig, incised arm
ME	Lahun ⁴¹⁷		12D.	Limestone, paint	unfinished statuette, wearing a tripartite head-dress, possibly Taweret. Traces of red paint.
ME	Lahun ⁴¹⁸		12-13D.	Limestone	crocodile on back; hippo face with leonine mane; showing teeth; arms broken off
ME	Lahun ⁴¹⁹		12-13D.	Limestone	"rough large figure" or "a small one"
ME	Lahun ⁴²⁰		L.MK	Faience	leonine face
ME	Lahun ⁴²¹		12D.	Limestone	hippopotamus Standing on base; front part of base missing; head well carved



Figure 39 (left) – MK faience Ipet/Taweret figurine from Lisht MMA 34.1.127. Image accessed from online museum catalogue 4/9/2016.

Figure 40 (right) – Ipet/Taweret figurine with crocodile on back, from Byblos. Image from Ceruti, "Hippopotamus Goddesses," fig. 10.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

⁴¹⁵ Ceruti, "Hippopotamus Goddess," 102-3; el-Sawi, *Excavations at Tell Basta*, 77, figs. 177-9; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 330, fig. 4.4.

⁴¹⁶ Petrie, *KGH*, 31.

⁴¹⁷ Griffith, *Catalogue*, 21; Quirke, *Lahun Studies*, 143; B. J. Kemp and R. S. Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery in Second Millenium Egypt* (SDAIK 7. Mainz: Zabern, 1980), 167.

⁴¹⁸ Petrie, *IKG*, 11; museum number on online database.

⁴¹⁹ Petrie, *IKG*, 11.

⁴²⁰ Petrie, *KGH*, 31; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 330, fig. 4.5.

⁴²¹ Griffith, *Catalogue*, 21; Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 167.

A number of Ipet/Taweret amulets also occur during this period. In style, they ranged from schematic forms (Figure 41)⁴²² to simply modelled depictions (Figure 42).⁴²³ Both variations emphasized important features, namely the pregnant belly and hippopotamus head. While excavators found most during the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period in tombs, some appeared in town contexts as well. They are spread in both the Fayum/Middle Egypt region and Upper Egypt, with a few from Nubia. In contrast, seals (Figure 44) and sealings (Figure 43) from this time more often occurred in town contexts.⁴²⁴ These seals often depicted her holding a knife, *ꜥnh*, *nfr*, and/or *s3*, in direct parallel to her depictions on the wands.

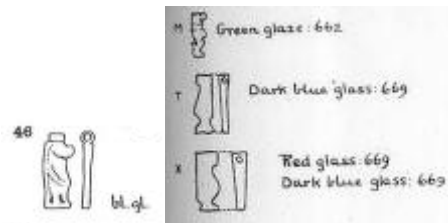


Figure 41 (left) – Simply modeled MK Ipet/Taweret amulet. Image from Brunton, *Qau III*, pl. 11.46.
Figure 42 (right) – Schematic MK Ipet/Taweret amulets from Herageh. Image from Engelbach, *Herageh*, pl. LIV.

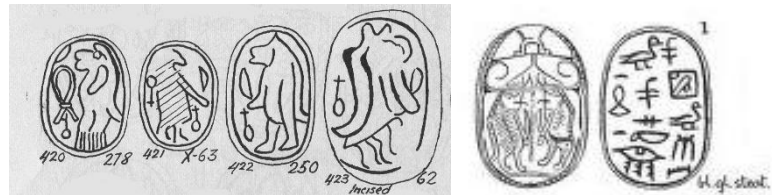


Figure 43 – Late MK Ipet/Taweret sealings from Uronarti. Image from Reisner, "Clay sealings," fig. 16.420-3.
Figure 44 – 13th Dynasty scarab with Ipet/Tawerets. Image from Brunton, *Qau III*, pl. XIX 1.

⁴²² Ex: Engelbach, *Herageh*, pl. 50, no. 7

⁴²³ Ex: Downes, *Esna*, 54 (illus.), graves 263.3, 268.

⁴²⁴ G. Reisner, "Clay sealings of Dynasty XIII from Uronarti Fort." *Kush* 3 (1955): 68 (Seal 420-3); versus from tombs: Romano, *The Bes-image*, I, 34, Cat. 19 (Dahshur); G. Brunton, *Qau and Badari III* (BSAE 50; London: BSAE, 1930), pl. XIX 1; J. Vercoutter, *Mirgissa II* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1975), 178 fig. 71.

Table 8 – Ipet/Taweret MK-SIP Amulets

Region	Site	Location	Date	Material	No.	Bibliography
ME	Harageh	Tomb 528	12D.	Faience	1	UC 2983-42n: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
ME	Lisht	Tomb 378	1.MK	Faience	1	Hayes, <i>Scepter</i> , I, 237.
ME	Lisht	Tomb 883	1.MK	Faience	1	Hayes, <i>Scepter</i> , I, 237.
ME	Harageh	Tomb 271	1.MK	Faience	1	Engelbach, <i>Harageh</i> , pl. 50, no. 7; Quirke, <i>Birth Tusks</i> , 330 fig. 4.6.
ME	Harageh	Tomb	12D.	Faience	1	Manchester 6141: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
ME	Sidmant	Tomb	SIP	Faience	1	Manchester 6633: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
UE	Abydos	Tomb	12D.	Faience	2	Manchester 4095: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
UE	Abydos	Tomb E20	13D.	Faience	1	Philadelphia E 9314: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
UE	Abydos	Grave 1817	MK	Green feldspar	1	Andrews, <i>Jewellery</i> I, 259.
UE	Assasif	Tomb 24, S Chamber, jewelry box	MK	Unclear	1	Carnarvon and Carter, <i>Five Years' Excavations</i> , 53, pl. XLVI.2 (G, seventh from left)
UE	Assasif	Tomb 24, S Chamber, jewelry box	MK	Faience	1	Carnarvon and Carter, <i>Five Years' Excavations</i> , 53, pl. XLVI.2 (G, seventh from left)
UE	Assasif	MM 840, pit in portico	1.MK-SIP	Electrum, plaster	9	MMA 13.180.4a-i: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
UE	Assasif	MM 840, pit in portico	1.MK-SIP	Lapis lazuli	1	Hayes, <i>Scepter</i> , I, 237.
UE	Esna	Grave 263.3	MK	Faience	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 54 (illus.), tomb list.
UE	Esna	Grave 288	MK	Faience	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 54 (illus.), tomb list.
UE	Esna	Grave 288	MK	Faience	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , tomb list.
UE	Esna	Tomb	SIP	Steatite, glazed	1	Manchester 4086: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
UE	Esna	Grave 190	SIP	Faience	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , tomb list.

UE	Sheikh Farag	Tomb SF42	MK	Faience	1	MFA 13.3597: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
UE	Sheikh Farag	Tomb SF42	MK	Faience	1	MFA 13.3680: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
UE	Sheikh Farag	Tomb SF86	MK	Faience	27	MFA 13.3639: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
Nubia	Semna	Tomb S708	MK(?)	Lapis lazuli, amazonite	3	MFA 27.874: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
Nubia	Semna	Tomb S708	MK(?)	Carnelian	3	MFA 27.875: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
Nubia	Toshka West	Cemetery D	MK	Ivory	1	Yale ANT 265145: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
ME	Lahun	Town	12D.	Flint	1	A. Behrmann, <i>Das Nilpferd in der Vorstellungswelt der alten Agypter</i> (Frankfurt: P. Lang, 1989), v. 1, Dok. 131; Petrie, <i>KGH</i> , 30, pl. VIII (22). Petrie describes it as a "children's toy," but Behrmann states that it is more likely to be an amulet.
ME	Lahun	Town	12D.	Faience	1	Manchester 6169: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
ME	Lahun	Town	MK	Steatite	1	UC 51856: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
ME	Lisht	House A1	13-e.18D.	Faience	1	MMA 22.1.1944d: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
ME	Lisht	House A1	13-e.18D.	Faience	1	MMA 22.1.1944u: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.
ME	Lisht	House A1	13-e.18D.	Faience	1	MMA 22.1.1944v: Assessed on museum online catalogue 3/5/17.

On the wands, Ipet/Taweret was one of the most prominent figures. They depict an upright, pregnant figure with hippopotamus snout, lion's man, human pregnant belly and

pendulous breasts, and the back of a crocodile. Variations include paired,⁴²⁵ destroying human,⁴²⁶ knife on *nh*,⁴²⁷ knife on *nh* with snake/snake-staff,⁴²⁸ knife on *s3*,⁴²⁹ knife without *nh* or *s3*,⁴³⁰ knife without *nh* or *s3* with snake,⁴³¹ with snake and *nh*,⁴³² and with just snake.⁴³³ While part of Altenmüller's dating of the wands used variations of her appearance,⁴³⁴ those may instead be regional variations.⁴³⁵

In addition to figurines, wands, and amulets, Ipet/Taweret also occurred on other objects. On a steatite box from Lisht North (Figure 45), she holds a *s3*-loop.⁴³⁶ On another steatite box from Asasif,⁴³⁷ the long sides depicted a pair each hold a knife over a *s3*-loop. Several Ipets wielding knives also occurred on the short and long sides of painted box Fitzwilliam E15.1907.⁴³⁸ She also appeared holding a knife and a snake, biting the latter, on one of the sides of the headrest of Neferhotep.⁴³⁹

Middle Kingdom objects depicting Ipet/Taweret highlighted her role as protector of the sun god and the human child after birth. Representations regularly depicted her wielding either protective symbols, snakes or snake-wands, or knives, particularly those with more domestic

⁴²⁵ Ashmolean E2223.

⁴²⁶ MMA 15.5.197; Madrid MAN 16303.

⁴²⁷ MMA 15.5.197, ex-Cecil Collection, MMA 08.200.19, MMA 22.1.79a-b, Palestine AM 33.1578, MFA 20.1780.

⁴²⁸ UC16535.

⁴²⁹ Manchester 1799, Cairo JE 6155, Cairo JE 2007.04.58, Philadelphia E 2914, MMA 08.200.19, Cairo JE 31046, Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. Ku1.

⁴³⁰ MMA 22.1.153, MFA 20.1780

⁴³¹ Louvre N 1489; Marseille MAM 471; MMA 19.2.18 A-B; BM EA 18175.

⁴³² UC16535

⁴³³ Cairo CG 9434 (JE 30032).

⁴³⁴ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 48-63.

⁴³⁵ See below, § 6.3.1.

⁴³⁶ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 332, fig. 4.13.

⁴³⁷ Weingarten, *Transformation*, 19, pl. 15; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 332.

⁴³⁸ For mention of Aha on the same box, see above, § 2.2.1, p. 30.

⁴³⁹ G. Miniaci and S. Quirke, "Reconceiving the Tomb in the Late Middle Kingdom. The Burial of the Accountant of the Main Enclosure Neferhotep at Dra Abu al-Naga," *BIFAO* 109 (2009): 344. For Ahat on this object, see above, § 2.2.1, pp. 30.

and/or bedroom associations, such as seals and sealings, boxes, and at least one headrest. These objects represent the closest parallel to Ipet/Taweret on the apotropaic wands, suggesting that this motif had particular domestic/bedroom/birth symbolism. Already in this period, boxes and headrests demonstrated her relationship with the bedroom, a feature which will gain further prominence in the New Kingdom. Her depiction on the headrest of Neferhotep notably included the inscription *s3 hrw*, “protection of the day,” a phrase also present on magical wands and Papyrus Berlin 3027.⁴⁴⁰ The context of this phrase indicates a daily-life protective function.



Figure 45 – Steatite box MMA 22.1.1054 from Lisht North. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 4.13.

2.5.1.1 Hippopotamus Figurines

While the meaning of the composite Ipet/Taweret is clear, that of the hippopotamus is more ambivalent.⁴⁴¹ Based on the association with faience figurines, Lacovara supposed that the faience hippopotami represented Ipet/Taweret.⁴⁴² As denizens of the Underworld, they were also associated with Seth.⁴⁴³ In their funerary roles, the goddesses Isis, Hathor, and Nut can also appear as hippopotami.⁴⁴⁴ The animal occurred on seals and as hippo-headed amulets, though the most prevalent appearance was on figurines. These figurines, predominantly from the Middle Kingdom, range from faience types to those in either clay, limestone, or alabaster. There are

⁴⁴⁰ See §§ 5.2.4.1 and 6.3.2.1.

⁴⁴¹ Hornung and Staehelin, *Skarabäen*, 127.

⁴⁴² P. Lacovara, "A new date for an old hippopotamus," *JMFA* 4 (1992): 22.

⁴⁴³ L. Störk, "Nilpferd" *LÄ* 4 (1979): col. 504.

⁴⁴⁴ Störk, "Nilpferde," col. 503-4.

about five dozen faience hippopotami figurines known, but far fewer came from excavations, with most from the antiquities market.⁴⁴⁵ In contrast, the clay figurines were less subject to the antiquities trade and tended to be less well preserved.⁴⁴⁶

Hippopotamus figurines with known contexts came from sites from the Delta to Kerma,⁴⁴⁷ though they predominate in Abydos and the Theban area. The faience figurines belonged primarily to the funerary realm, with at least 65 from tombs and 33 from the funerary Temple of Obelisks in Byblos.⁴⁴⁸ The earliest example dates to about 1900 B.C.E. and the last one comes from an early New Kingdom tomb in Thebes.⁴⁴⁹ Similarly, the non-faience hippopotami predominated in tombs, with only five examples from town contexts.⁴⁵⁰ Non-faience hippopotamus figurines date mainly to the Middle Kingdom, though excavators found sporadic finds in later periods.⁴⁵¹ In the few cases where the original location of hippo figurines was recorded, excavators found faience examples either behind the back⁴⁵² or at the feet of the deceased.⁴⁵³ Since many had their legs broken off, previous scholarship had assumed this

⁴⁴⁵ Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 120.

⁴⁴⁶ See A. Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd in der Vorstellungswelt der Alten Ägypter*: Teil I, Katalog (Frankfurt, 1989), 134, 137.

⁴⁴⁷ Miniaci, "Unbroken Stories," 241-257 with catalogue of faience figurines with context, including hippopotami. For non-faience figurines, see A. Tony-Révillon, Adrienne. "À propos d'une statuette d'hippopotame récemment entrée au Musée de Boston." *ASAE* 50 (1950): 47-63; Lacovara, "A new date," 17-26; Y. Tristant, "Two early Middle Kingdom hippopotamus figurines from Dendara," in *The cultural manifestation of religious experience: Studies in honour of Boyo G. Ockinga*, ed. Di Biase-Dyson et al. (Münster: Ugarit, 2017), 53-69.

⁴⁴⁸ In contrast to just three from town contexts: Manchester 6142 (Harageh; Found on museum online catalogue, accessed 9/4/2018); Petrie, *KGH*, 31 (UC6489).

⁴⁴⁹ A. Caubet and G. Peirrat-Bonnefois, *Faïences de l'antiquité: de l'Égypte à l'Iran* (Paris: Musée du Louvre, 2005), 40, no. 77.

⁴⁵⁰ Lahun: W.M.F. Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use with over 1800 figures from University College, London* (London: BSAE, 1927), 61, pl. LIII.482, 505; A.S. Griffith, *Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities of the XII and XVIII Dynasties from Kahun, Illahun and Gurob* (Manchester: Sherratt & Hughes, 1910), 20-1; Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 167.

⁴⁵¹ Ex from NK: *CoA* II, pl. XL.8.

⁴⁵² D. Patch, "Hippopotamus Figurines," in *Ancient Egypt transformed: The Middle Kingdom*, ed. A. Oppenheim et al. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015), 216-7, Cat. 157;

⁴⁵³ Brunton, *Matmar*, 54, pl. XLVII.17; B. Bothmer, "A hippopotamus statuette of the Middle Kingdom," *BMFA* 49.278 (1951):102, n.5.

breakage was deliberate,⁴⁵⁴ presumably to magically render them harmless for the afterlife.

However, that assumption appears unlikely given complete examples⁴⁵⁵ and those attached to bases.⁴⁵⁶

There are four different positions in which artists modeled the hippopotamus during the Middle Kingdom: standing (Figure 46),⁴⁵⁷ walking (Figure 47),⁴⁵⁸ recumbent (Figure 48),⁴⁵⁹ and rearing (Figure 49).⁴⁶⁰ The striding position was the most common, with standing and recumbent being the next more frequent.⁴⁶¹ About 10% of the faience hippos are rearing, with the animal sitting on its haunches with head raised and turned to one side to reveal a wide-open mouth. The empty sockets in the mouth indicate this type originally had teeth, likely made of ivory.⁴⁶²

⁴⁵⁴ P. Lacovara, "Hippopotamus," in *Mummies and magic: the funerary arts of ancient Egypt*, ed. S. D'Auria et al. (Boston: MFA, 1988), 127, Cat. 58; P. Kozloff, "Cat. 142-3: Hippopotamus," in *Gifts of the Nile: Ancient Egyptian Faience*, ed. F. Friedman (New York; London: Thames & Hudson, 1998), 238; Friedman, "Cat. 144-5 Hippopotamus," in *Gifts of the Nile*, 238; Patch, "Hippopotamus Figurines," 217.

⁴⁵⁵ Tristant, "Hippopotamus Figurines," 59; K. Jochem, "Ewiges Leben: Nilpferdfigurinen aus Assiut," in *Pérégrinations avec Erhart Graefe: Festschrift zu seinem 75. Geburtstag*, ed. A.I. Blöbaum et al. (ÄAT 87; 2018), 241, n.12.

⁴⁵⁶ Non-faience: Jochem, "Ewiges Leben," 241, n.14; faience: Louvre E 7709 (L. Keimer, "Nouvelles recherches au sujet au Potamogeton Lucens L. et remarques sur l'ornementation des hippopotames en faïence du Moyen Empire," *REA* 2 (1929): Cat. 1, pl. 11; Caubet and Pierrat-Bonnefois, *Faïences de l'Antiquité*, 40, cat. No. 77).

⁴⁵⁷ Ex: Lisht North (G. Miniaci, "The Collapse of Faience Figurine Production at the End of the Middle Kingdom: Reading the History of an Epoch between Postmodernism and Grand Narrative," *JEGH* 7/1 (2014): 119, n. 57 [MMA 15.3.59].); Meir (Hayes, *Scepter* I, 226-7, fig. 142; Behrmann, *Nilpferd* I, Dok. 142.f.49/50; Miniaci, "Unbroken Stories," fig. 7.); Kerma (Behrmann, *Nilpfeder* I, Dok. 142.f.10; Bothmer, "A hippopotamus statuette," 65, n.2, fig. 2 (right).)

⁴⁵⁸ Ex: Byblos (Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos* II:2, 741-6, no. 15121-37, pl. C-CI); MMA 32.1.230 (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 141; Miniaci, "Collapse of Faience Figurine Production," 119, n. 57.); Cairo 877 (Keimer, "Nouvelles recherches," 216, Cat. 2, fig. 7a-b).

⁴⁵⁹ Ex: Byblos (Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos* II:2, cat. 15141-5, 15147-52); Lisht South (Keimer, "Nouvelles recherches," 224, Cat. 29-33, fig. 18; Behrmann, *Nilpfeder*, v. 1, Dok. 142.f.16-20.); Matmar (Brunton, *Matmar*, 54, pl. XLVII.17; Behrmann, *Nilpferd* I, Dok. 142.f71.)

⁴⁶⁰ Ex: Byblos (Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos* II:2, cat. 15138, 15140, and 15146); Abydos (Keimer, "Nouvelles recherches," 222, Cat. 20, fig. 15.).

⁴⁶¹ Kozloff, "Cat. 142-3: Hippopotamus," 238. See also Keimer, "Nouvelles recherches," 216-225.

⁴⁶² Kozloff, "Cat. 142-3: Hippopotamus," 238.

As previous scholarship has noted, the rearing hippopotamus appears parallel to the depiction in hippopotamus hunting scenes.⁴⁶³ The latter symbolized control over chaotic forces, with the hippopotamus representing Seth.⁴⁶⁴ Initially depicted in Old Kingdom tomb scenes,⁴⁶⁵ the hunt also occurred by the late Middle Kingdom on private seal amulets⁴⁶⁶ and in a spell from the Coffin Texts.⁴⁶⁷ The scene appears in tomb decoration again during the early 18th Dynasty, with the tomb owner himself performing the action instead of harpoon-wielding servants.⁴⁶⁸ The peaceful poses of the majority of the faience hippopotami, however, indicate a more benign meaning of the hippo.⁴⁶⁹ Some scholars had posited that these hippos represented “abbreviated” versions of the hunted animal,⁴⁷⁰ but there does not appear to be any significant size difference to support this supposition. Instead, the context, poses, and imagery indicate a larger focus on rebirth.



Figure 46 (left) – Standing hippopotamus MMA 17.9.1, from Meir Tomb B3. Image from Miniaci, “Unbroken Stories,” fig. 7.

Figure 47 (right) – Striding hippopotamus from Dra Abu el-Nega. Image from Keimer, “Nouvelles recherches,” Fig. 7a.

⁴⁶³ Bothmer, “A hippopotamus statuette,” 102; Behrmann, *Nilpferd* I, 11-13, 18-20; Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 120.

⁴⁶⁴ Patch, “Hippopotamus Figurines,” 217. See also T. Säve-Söderbergh, *On Egyptian representations of hippopotamus hunting as a religious motive* (Uppsala: C. W. K. Gleerup, Lund, I distribution, 1953).

⁴⁶⁵ Behrmann, *Nilpferd* I, nos. 69-114.

⁴⁶⁶ D’Auria et al., *Mummies and Magic*, 47, 51, 187, 241.

⁴⁶⁷ CT I, 259; Störk, “Nilpferd,” col. 502.

⁴⁶⁸ Bothmer, “A hippopotamus statuette,” 102, n. 4.

⁴⁶⁹ Lacovara, “A new date,” 24; Tristant, “Hippopotamus Figurines,” 53.

⁴⁷⁰ Behrmann, *Nilpferd* I, Dok. 99, 103; Jochem, “Ewiges Leben,” 243.

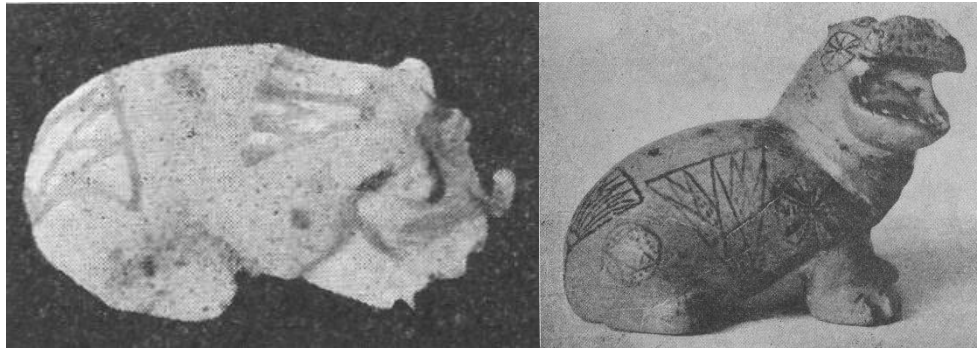


Figure 48 (left) – Recumbent hippopotamus from Lisht South. Image from Keimer, "Nouvelles recherches," Fig. 18.
Figure 49 (right) – Rearing hippopotamus from Abydos, Tomb 416. Image from Keimer, "Nouvelles recherches," Fig. 15.

The black-painted decoration and color of the faience hippopotamus figurines align with a focus on rebirth, in keeping with the largely funerary context of such objects.⁴⁷¹ The bright blue invoked the Nile and its fecundity, as well as symbolized the primeval waters, the heavens, regeneration, and the sun.⁴⁷² Much of the decoration consisted of marshy plants, as well as occasional frogs and dragonflies, which give the figurines the appearance of a hippo emerging from water, akin to emerging from the waters of creation.⁴⁷³ The occasional appearance of the blue lotus is significant given its solar symbolism as a flower which closes at night and opens in the morning.⁴⁷⁴ Notably, faience vessels also bore similar decoration.⁴⁷⁵ Given the association of

⁴⁷¹ Hornung and Staehelin, *Skarabäen*, 128f.

⁴⁷² H. Kees, "Farbensymbolik in ägyptischen religiösen Texten," *NAWG* 11 (1943): 431-4; R. S. Bianchi, "Symbols and Meanings," in *Gifts of the Nile: Ancient Egyptian Faience*, ed. F. Friedman et al. (New York; London: Thames & Hudson, 1998), 25; K. Yamamoto, "Comprehending Life: Community, Environment, and the Supernatural," in *Ancient Egypt transformed: The Middle Kingdom*, ed. A. Oppenheim et al. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015), 190.

⁴⁷³ Bothmer, "A hippopotamus statuette," 101; Hornung and Staehelin, *Skarabäen*, 128; Bianchi, "Symbols and Meanings," 25; Kozloff, "Cat. 142-3 Hippopotamus," 238; Patch, "Hippopotamus Figurines," 217; Yamamoto, "Comprehending Life," 190.

⁴⁷⁴ Lacovara, "A new date," 24; See also H. Schlögl, *Der Sonnengott auf der Blüte: Eine ägyptische Kosmogonie des Neuen Reiches* (AH 5; Basel, 1977).

⁴⁷⁵ Lacovara, "A new date," 24, n. 49; Yamamoto, "Comprehending Life," 190, fig. 90.

these vessels with Hathor's cult, some scholars assumed that the hippopotami also had a fertility meaning.⁴⁷⁶

Non-faïence hippopotamus figurines were either in limestone or pottery. The latter tended to be made of a rough, low-fired clay,⁴⁷⁷ showing either a freestanding hippopotamus (Figure 50)⁴⁷⁸ or the animal on a rectangular base (Figure 51).⁴⁷⁹ In contrast, limestone figurines tended to show the hippopotamus on a sledge (Figure 53)⁴⁸⁰ or boat (Figure 52), though there is one example of the animal on a base.⁴⁸¹

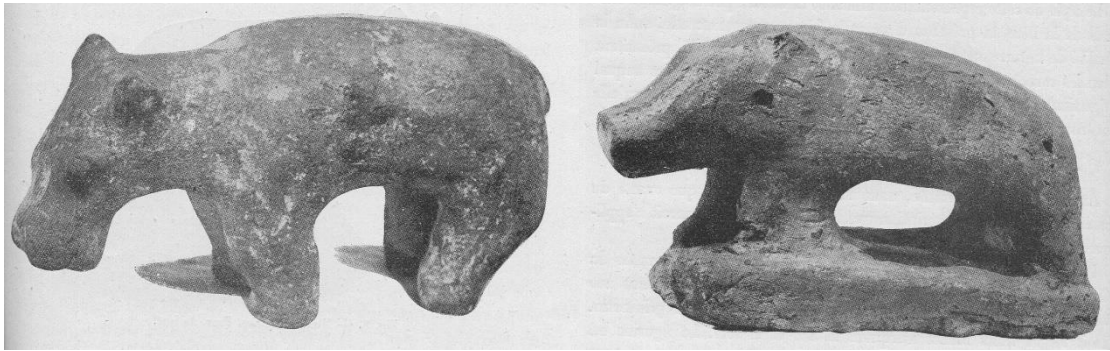


Figure 50 (left) – Clay hippopotamus from Asyut. Image from Tony-Révillon, "À propos d'une statuette d'hippopotame," fig. 7.

Figure 51 (right) – Clay hippopotamus from Dendera. Image from Tony-Révillon, "À propos d'une statuette d'hippopotame," fig. 9.

⁴⁷⁶ Caubet and Pierrat-Bonnefois, *Faïences de l'antiquité*, 41; Patch, "Hippopotamus Figurines," 77.

⁴⁷⁷ Lacovara, "A new date," 20.

⁴⁷⁸ Ex: BM EA 47376; Turin S 15611, 15616; Tony-Révillon, "À propos d'une statuette d'hippopotame," fig. 7.

⁴⁷⁹ Ex: BM EA 47375; Turin S 11002, 15612-4; Cairo JE 44883; Lacovara, "A new date," fig. 3; Tony-Révillon, "À propos d'une statuette d'hippopotame," fig. 9.

⁴⁸⁰ Manchester 135; MMA 22.1.1639; Dunand, *Fouilles des Byblos II*:2, Cat. 15161; Behrmann, *Nilpferd I*, Dok. 134a.

⁴⁸¹ Manchester 136.

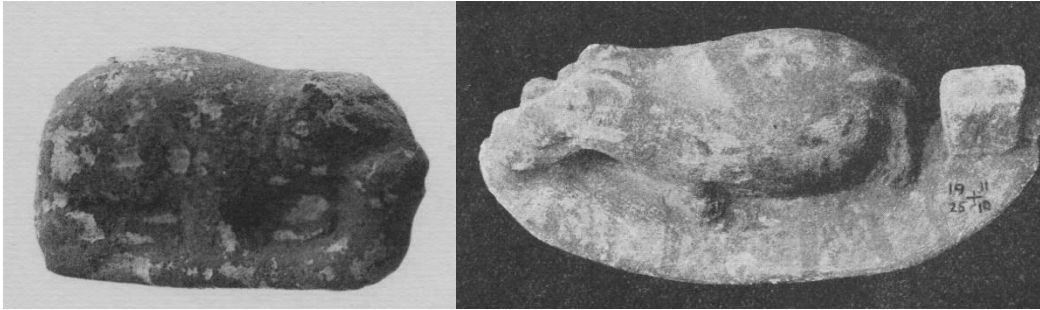


Figure 52 – Hippopotamus on sledge, from Byblos, Temple of Obelisks. Image from Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos* II:2, no. 15161, pl. CII.

Figure 53 – Limestone hippopotamus on boat, from Asyut. Image from Keimer, “Nouvelles recherches,” Fig. 19.

A number of the hippopotami had preserved paint, either of red,⁴⁸² white,⁴⁸³ or white over a red base.⁴⁸⁴ The meaning of this decoration was ambiguous, with the red likely symbolizing Seth, who Egyptians sometimes referred to as the “red one,” a color of evil.⁴⁸⁵ In contrast, the white-painted decoration, consisting of white dots and dashes, were parallel to the painted decoration on pottery from Middle and Upper Egypt from the late Old Kingdom until the early New Kingdom, suggesting a funerary or cultic function.⁴⁸⁶ The white paint, as well as the hippopotamus on a sledge, appear to reference to the “white hippopotamus festival,” a ceremony involving a hippo on a sledge depicted in texts and a few reliefs (Figure 54).⁴⁸⁷ The festival specifically involved celebration of the appearance of a hippopotamus with a white color,⁴⁸⁸ which indicates that this hippopotamus represented a more positive hippo deity.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸² Manchester 135; MMA 22.1.62; MMA 22.1.1639.

⁴⁸³ K. Jochem, *Ancient Asyut. The First Synthesis after 300 Years of Research* (AP 1; Wiesbaden 2007), 154, Fig. 112; Jochem, “Ewiges Leben: Nilferdgiurinen aus Assiut,” 239-247; Turin S 15612.

⁴⁸⁴ Keimer, “Nouvelle recherches,” Cat. 34-35.

⁴⁸⁵ Säve-Söderbergh, *On Egyptian representations of hippopotamus hunting*, 48; Lacovara, “A new date,” 23.

⁴⁸⁶ T. Rzeuska, *Chronological overview of pottery from Asyut. A contribution to the history of Gebel Asuit Al-Gharbi* (AP 7; Wiesbaden, 2018), 179-180; Jochem, “Ewiges Leben,” 242.

⁴⁸⁷ L. Keimer, “Un bas-relief de Karnak dessiné par Prisse D’Avennes, perdu plus tard et retrouvé au printemps 1943,” *ASAE* 42 (1943): 271-277; Säve-Söderbergh, *On Egyptian representations of hippopotamus hunting*, 47-55.

⁴⁸⁸ Säve-Söderbergh, *On Egyptian representations of hippopotamus hunting*, 47-55. On the symbolism of white as symbolic of purity, see Kees, “Farbensymbolik,” 442f.

⁴⁸⁹ Lacovara, “A new date,” 24.

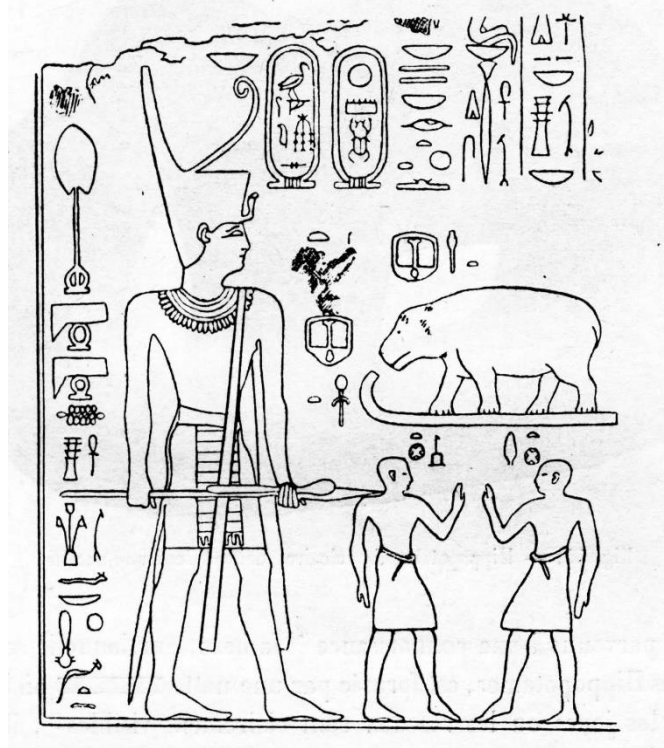


Figure 54 – Scene of white hippopotamus festival, from Karnak, jubilee building of Tuthmosis III. Image from Keimer, “Un Bas-relief de Karnak,” fig. 54.

Based on the evidence discussed above, the hippopotamus figurines likely did not represent Ipet/Taweret. Indeed, her iconography was consistently that of a composite creature with a hippo-face, rather than as a full hippopotamus. Similarly, the apotropaic wands reliably depicted her standing upright on her hind two legs. The marsh iconography of the faience hippopotamus figurines likewise did not occur with the goddess. Finally, none of the hippopotamus figurines depicted the creature with a knife nor a *s3*-sign, typical features of Ipet/Taweret iconography from the Middle Kingdom on.

2.5.2 Iconography of the New Kingdom

Imagery of Ipet/Taweret became much more common in the New Kingdom, though much of it remained consistent with earlier representations. In particular, the number of objects from Deir el-Medina suggests a local cult to the goddess. The lion’s mane appears to have been a

feature largely of the late Middle Kingdom to the 17th-early 18th Dynasty, since the lion's mane largely disappears afterwards, instead replaced by the mid-18th Dynasty by the tripartite wig.⁴⁹⁰ This switch perhaps served to highlight her association with human femininity and fertility.

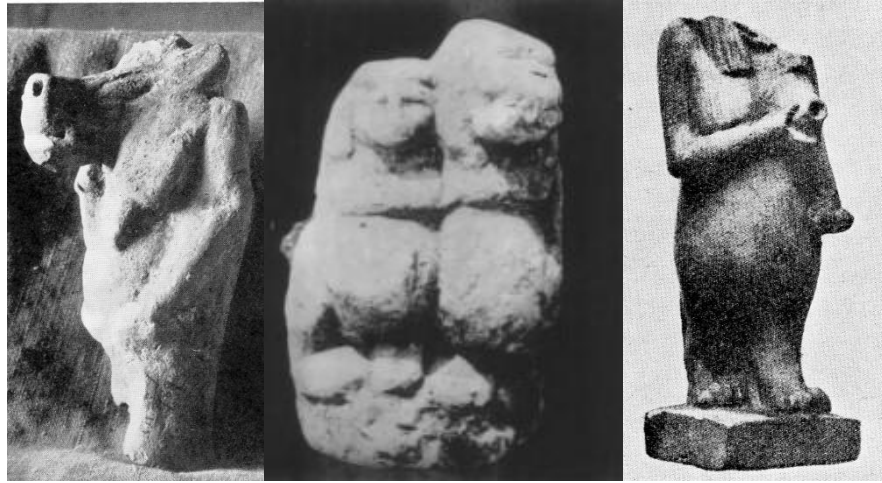


Figure 55 (left) – Taweret figurine from Amarna. Image from *CoA* II, pl. 34.4.

Figure 56 (middle) – Figurine of Taweret and pregnant woman. Image from Ayrton, *Abydos* III, pl. L.7.

Figure 57 (right) – Figurine of nursing Taweret, Louvre E 14232. Image from Borchardt, *S'ahu-re* I, Abb. 177.

Most figurines from this period originated from Amarna (Figure 55)⁴⁹¹ and Deir el-Medina (Figure 58).⁴⁹² A head fragment from Qau was naturalistically sculpted, with a line for mouth.⁴⁹³ A wooden figurine of Taweret from Deir el-Medina had a red painted body, blue wig, and a white and black diagonal crocodile tail (Figure 59).⁴⁹⁴ From the early New Kingdom onwards, another type of Taweret figurine occurred, a hollow type with breasts perforated to allow liquids to slowly escape (Figure 57), which were used to sprinkle lustral water or milk.⁴⁹⁵ This variation likely served to highlight her nursing role. An interesting statuette of a woman

⁴⁹⁰ Ceruti, "Percezione," 22-3; "Hippopotamus Goddess," 107.

⁴⁹¹ *CoA* II, 43, 46, 57, 87, pl. XL.8; Borchardt and Ricke, *Wohnhäuser*, 241.

⁴⁹² Bruyère, *Rapport* 7, 20, fig. 1 (left); *Ibid.*, *Rapport* 20.3, 73, fig. 6.

⁴⁹³ UC60055. Assessed from online museum catalogue 7/1/2016.

⁴⁹⁴ Turin C. 526: V. Davies and R. Friedman, *Egypt* (London: British Museum Press, 1998), 171.

⁴⁹⁵ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 104-107; Louvre E 14232: L. Borchardt, *S'ahu-re* I, Abb. 177; G. Capriotti Vittozzi, "Una statuette della ippopotamo all'Università di Roma 'La Sapienza'," *Aegyptus* 85 (2005): fig. 9.

standing with Taweret (Figure 56) occurred in the workmen's village associated with the construction of Ahmose's tomb and temple at Abydos.⁴⁹⁶ This figurine particularly emphasizes Taweret's connection with women. Another variation, from the Valley of the Kings, is a wooden figurine of a seated Taweret overlaid with plastered linen.⁴⁹⁷

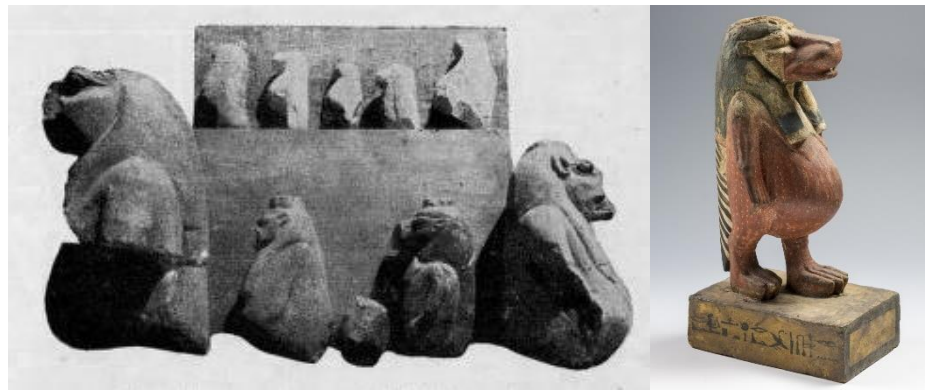


Figure 58 (left) – Figurines and amulets of Taweret from Deir el-Medina. Image from Bruyère, *Rapport* 20.3, fig. 6.

Figure 59 (right) – Turin C. 526. Image assessed from online museum catalogue 4/5/2019.



Figure 60 – NK Taweret amulets from Amarna. Image from Stevens, *Private religion*, fig. II.2.9.

⁴⁹⁶ Ayrton et al., *Abydos* III, pl. 50.7. Now Fitzwilliam E.194.1899.

⁴⁹⁷ BM EA 50699: Pinch, *Magic*, fig. 51; Strudwick, *Masterpieces of Ancient Egypt*, 158-9. Most sources state the figurine came from the tomb of Tuthmosis III, but Nicholas Reeves (*The complete Valley of the Kings: tombs and treasures of Egypt's greatest pharaohs* [New York: Thames & Hudson, 1996], 133) stated it came from the tomb of Horemheb.

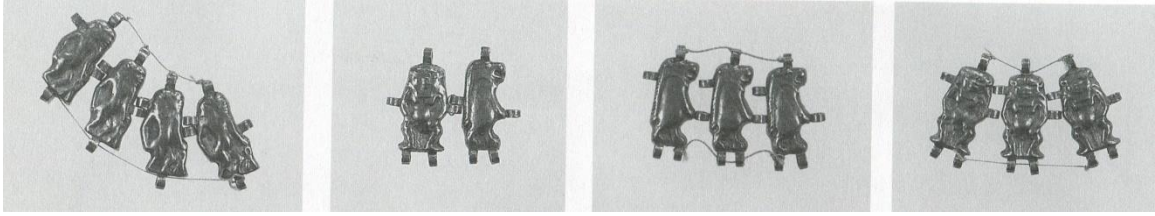


Figure 61 – Bes and Taweret pendants, gold. Image from Lilyquist, *Tomb of Three Foreign Wives*, Cat. 134, fig. 165.

Excavators have uncovered hundreds of Taweret amulets dating to the New Kingdom (Figures 60-61). In Amarna alone, at least one hundred and six pendants were recorded.⁴⁹⁸ Other amulets were excavated from the palace at Malkata,⁴⁹⁹ Memphis,⁵⁰⁰ and Hathor temples.⁵⁰¹ They were commonly simply modelled, with straight back and pierced for hanging. Another type was a more stylized version, include a back-to-back Taweret.⁵⁰² Both styles continued primary focus on the hippopotamus head and pregnant belly, with the back and breasts being secondary characteristics. In at least a few examples, she held objects similar to her previous depictions on wands, namely the *s3* or *ꜥnh*.⁵⁰³ Seals depicting the goddess (Figures 62-64) also became quite common during this period, using much of the same motifs as those from the Middle Kingdom, such as *s3*-signs and knives.⁵⁰⁴

⁴⁹⁸ Stevens, *Private religion*, 39-40; Petrie, *Amarna*, pl. XVII.299; *CoA* I, 28, 77, 83, 86; *CoA* II, 78-81, 83-7, 89-97; *CoA* III, 85, 102, 104-5, 125-7.

⁴⁹⁹ MMA 11.215.160-9: Assessed from online museum catalogue 7/1/2016.

⁵⁰⁰ Giddy, *Kom Rabi'a*, 81, 85, pl. 19.

⁵⁰¹ Petrie, *Denderah*, pl. 23.15, 17; Karlin, "Sanctuaire d'Hathor," 340 (Inv. 14-15); Pinch, *Votive offerings to Hathor*, 292, pl. 60.

⁵⁰² Ex: Samson, *Amarna*, 96, pl. 50

⁵⁰³ Ex: Berlin ÄM 22001; MMA 11.215.163-4; UC1206.

⁵⁰⁴ For more detail on NK Taweret seals, see M. Stoof, *Pferd, Nilpferd und Thieris - Motive auf Siegelamuletten im alten Ägypten* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2017).

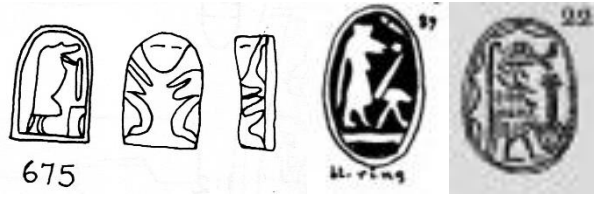


Figure 62 (left) – NK Taweret seal with Hathor-face on front. Image from Thomas, *Gurob*, pl. 36.675.

Figure 63 (middle) – Late NK ring with image of Taweret. Image from Petrie, *IKG*, pl. XXIII.89.

Figure 64 (right) – NK Taweret seal with *nfr*-sign. Image from Petrie and Brunton, *Sedment II*, pl. LVII.22.

Similar to Bes, Taweret during this period also appeared on bedroom furniture, developing upon her previous bedroom association. She occurred with Bes on chairs as well as bed panels (Figure 65).⁵⁰⁵ Similar to the amulets, she commonly held *s3*-signs or knives. Likewise, some headrests included her image, such as two examples where knives emerged from her feet.⁵⁰⁶ Such an association with the bedroom also occurred in bed inlays from Kerma,⁵⁰⁷ royal birth scenes,⁵⁰⁸ a wall painting from Amarna,⁵⁰⁹ and at least a couple model beds.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁵ Davis et al, *Tomb of Iouiya and Touiou*, illus. opposite p. 37, pls. XXXIII-XXXVI.

⁵⁰⁶ Cairo JE 33186 and Louvre AE 4236: Perraud, “Les appuis-tête de l’Égypte ancienne,” Cat. Bb B22i and Bb B29; Szpakowska, “Feet of Fury,” 317, fig. 2b.

⁵⁰⁷ See in § 6.2.16.1.

⁵⁰⁸ See below, § 7.3.2.

⁵⁰⁹ See in § 7.5.2.1.

⁵¹⁰ See in § 3.4.

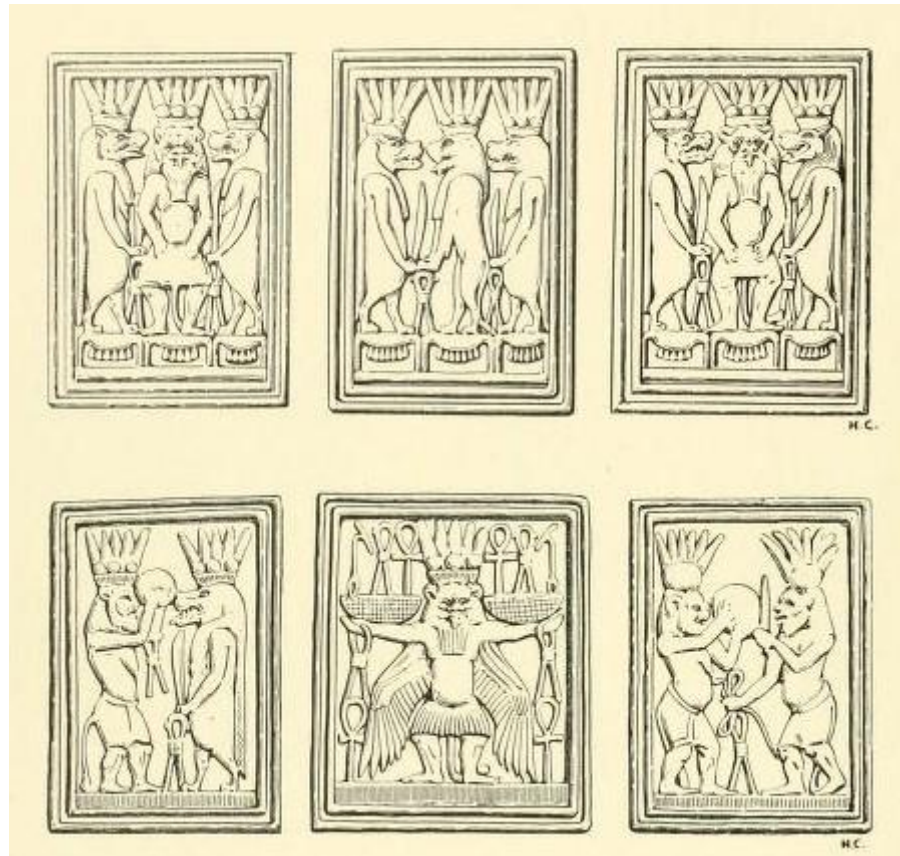


Figure 65 – Bed panels from CG 51110. Image from Davis et al, *Tomb of Iouiya and Touiou*, illus. opposite p. 37.

Taweret also occurred in a number of stelae, especially from Deir el-Medina.⁵¹¹ These depictions predominantly depicted her as a domestic deity or focus of a votive cult. The stelae had both male and female dedicatees, indicating that, while associated with women, the goddess was not exclusive to one gender. Quite relevant for our discussion, excavators found a stele, depicting a woman and girl before Taweret, in the same area of a house as the *lit clos* and a female figurine associated with a pottery bed model (Figure 66).⁵¹² Interestingly at least two

⁵¹¹ Ceruti, "Percezione," 23, n.35; Robins, *Reflections of Women*, Cat. 47; I. Vezzani, "Observazioni sul culto della dea Thoeris," in *L'Egitto in età Ramesside: atti del Convegno Chianciano Terme 17-18 dicembre 2009*, ed. D. Picchi (Milano: Silvana Editoriale, 2011), 83, Tav. XI; Behrmann, *Nilpferd*, Doc. 177b

⁵¹² Cincinatti AM 1921.279: CoA II, 5, pl. XII, 2; Capel, *Mistress*, 66-67, no. 16 a; Stevens, *Private religion*, 144, Fig. II.5.19.

stelae involved men worshipping the goddess,⁵¹³ with one requesting the goddess to allow him children (Figure 71).⁵¹⁴ Most of the stelae depicted Taweret standing while wearing a modius headdress with cow horns and solar disc, either alone⁵¹⁵ or with other deities (Figure 67).⁵¹⁶ Interestingly, one stela (Figure 69) depicted a Hathor-headed naos in which Taweret appeared and the small crocodile behind the goddess. Several stelae depicted the goddess seated on a throne (Figure 70), often with other deities like Hathor,⁵¹⁷ with one rare case of a fully anthropomorphic Taweret (Figure 71).⁵¹⁸

An interesting variant (Figure 68) depicted Hy showing devotion to three deities,⁵¹⁹ all shown teriomorphic, starting with from the god Amun-Ra as a ram placed on a small naos, then Taweret, with the title *nbt pt t3 šd (mw)* “Lady of the Sky, She who brings/takes out the water(?),”⁵²⁰ standing on a pedestal, and then Seth in the exceptional form of two superimposed little hippopotamuses, which are respectively called *šth ntr nfr* and *s3 nwt*. Her association with

⁵¹³ Fitzwilliam E. 31.1937: G. T. Martin, *Stelae from Egypt and Nubia in the Fitzwilliam Museum c. 3000BC – 1150AD* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 98; Brandl, “Die Schutzgottheiten Sched und Thoeris in Amarna,” 91-103.

⁵¹⁴ Glasgow EGNN.683: M. L. Bierbrier and H. J. A. de Meulenaere, “Hymne à Taourêt sur une stèle de Deir el-Médineh,” in *Sundries in Honour of Torgny Säve-Söderbergh*, ed. P. Lacovara et al. (Acta Universitatis Upslaliensis 13; Uppsala, 1987), 23-32.

⁵¹⁵ Ex: BM EA 284 (Robins, *Reflections of Women*, Cat. 47.), Cincinatti AM 1921.279, and Fitzwilliam E. 31.1937.

⁵¹⁶ MMA 47.105.4 (with Mut): Hayes, *Scepter II*, 388, fig. 243; Philadelphia 69-29-65 (with Amun-Ra): W. K. Simpson, *Inscribed Material from the Pennsylvania-Yale Excavations at Abydos* (Publications of the Pennsylvania-Yale Expedition to Egypt No. 6, 1995), 71, pl. 19; Turin CGT 50057 (with Amun and Seth): M. Tosi and A. Roccatti, *Stele ed altre epigrafi di Deir el Medina. CGT 50001-50262* (Turin: Museo Egizio, 1972), 93-94, 286; Turin CGT 50062 (with Meretseger): Vezzani, “Observazioni,” 83, Tav. XI; B. Bruyère, *Mert Seger à Deir el Médineh* (Cairo: IFAO, 1929-30), 170, fig. 91.I; Vezzani, “Observazioni,” 83, Tav. XI; Turin CGT 50057 (with Amun and Seth).

⁵¹⁷ BM EA 1388 (Nekhet and Hathor): M. L. Bierbrier, *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian stelae etc.* 10 (London: British Museum Press, 1982), pl. LXXVI; Louvre E 16347 (Hathor): Bruyère, *Rapport* 20.3, 335, fig. 206; Moscow I.1.a.5627 (Sobek and Hathor): S. Hodjash and O. Berlev, *The Egyptian reliefs and stelae in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow* (Leningrad: Aurora Art Publishers, 1982), no. 76.

⁵¹⁸ Glasgow EGNN.683.

⁵¹⁹ CGT 50057.

⁵²⁰ For translation of the title *t3 šd mw*, see C. Leitz, *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen VII* (OLA 116; Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 152.

water occurred clearly in her cult at Gebel el-Silsila, such as stela Cairo 36661 (Figure 69),⁵²¹ which gave her the epithet *pꜣ mw wꜥb* “that of pure water,”⁵²² a title seen in several Deir el-Medina objects.⁵²³ As Kucharek noted,⁵²⁴ this epithet, which occurred for a number of deities at Gebel el-Silsila, referred to the river front and plateau in the area. Both *tꜣ šd (mw)* and *pꜣ mw wꜥb* perhaps referenced her birthing role, with the waters implying to the waters of birth. This notion is supported by the domestic water-basins for this goddess, the mention of water instead of milk, and Gebel el-Silsila as a New Kingdom place for the worship of the inundation.⁵²⁵ Indeed, Exell noted that five Ramesside stelae depicted water being offered to Taweret, in all cases held by women.⁵²⁶ As we will see below, medical/magical spells considered the opened womb as akin to the inundation.⁵²⁷ Relatedly, other birth/fertility materials with watery associations include pebble figures, crocodiles, and turtles.⁵²⁸

⁵²¹ Bruyère, *Rapport* 20.3, 77, fig. 7; Capriotti Vittozzi, “Una statuette,” 227.

⁵²² Vezzani, “Observazioni,” 83.

⁵²³ A. Kucharek, “Die Felskapellen der 18. Dynastie in Gebel el-Silsileh” (Unpublished MA thesis, Heidelberg University, 1998), 86-7.

⁵²⁴ Kucharek, “Die Felskapellen,” 20-21.

⁵²⁵ For the latter, see A. Kucharek, “Gebel el-Silsileh,” *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egypt* 1/1 (2012): 1-17.

⁵²⁶ K. Exell, “A social and historical interpretation of Ramesside votive stelae” (PhD. University of Durham, 2006), V.1, 207; V. 2, Table A48, referring to Archaeological Museum Voronezh State University 156, Glasgow EGNN.683, BM 1388, Louvre E. 16374, and Turin 1601.

⁵²⁷ See § 5.2.4.2.

⁵²⁸ See below, §§ 3.4 and 6.2.9-10.



Figure 66 (left) – Cincinnati 1921.279, from Amarna. Image assessed from online museum catalogue.
Figure 67 (right) – MMA 47.105.4, from Deir el-Medina. Image assessed from online museum catalogue.



Figure 68 (left) – Turin CGT 50057. Image from Tosi and Roccati, *Stele e altre epigrafi*, 286.
Figure 69 (right) – Cairo 36661. Image from Bruyère, *Rapport* 20.3, fig. 7.



Figure 70 (left) - Stela Moscow I.I.a.5627, from Deir el-Medina. Image from Hodjash and Berlev, *Egyptian Reliefs and Stelae*, Cat. 76.

Figure 71 (right) – Glasgow EGNN.683. Image assessed from online museum catalogue 4/15/2019.

Taweret also occurred on other objects, predominantly from Deir el-Medina, where there appears to have been a cult to the goddess.⁵²⁹ For example, she appeared in an ostrakon from the site (Figure 72).⁵³⁰ Her name also occurred in Deir el-Medina on several lustration basins with Hathor-headed handles,⁵³¹ as well as an offering table.⁵³² One such basin dedicated a prayer to “Taweret, the pure water.”⁵³³ Another notable object from the site are the wooden doors of a naos dedicated to Taweret by Mesu and his son Amenwahsu, “servant of Taweret.”⁵³⁴

⁵²⁹ Weingarten, *Transformation*, 11.

⁵³⁰ Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue IV*, no. 3007-3010, pl. CLI.

⁵³¹ Bruyère, *Rapport 7*, 19-23.

⁵³² Turin CGT 22029: L. Habachi, *Tavole d'offerta, are e bacili da libagione 22001-22067* (Turin: Arte Fratelli Pozzo, 1977), 34-37, 136-7.

⁵³³ Bruyère, *Rapport 7*, fig. 2 (= BM 465).

⁵³⁴ GM II 4867: Bruyère, *Rapport 7*, 22; E. S. Bogoslovskiy, *Pamyatniki i dokumenty iz Der-elMedina khranyashchiesya v muzeyakh SSSR 4* (VDI 122; 1972), 75-85.

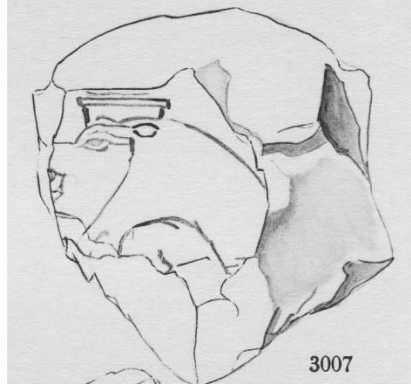


Figure 72 – Ostraca depicting Taweret. Image from Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue IV*, pl. CLI, no. 3007.

2.5.3 Conclusions

Throughout her development in the material record, Ipet/Taweret had remained a deity focused primarily on fertility and birth during daily life. Like Aha/Bes, she experienced the same rise of popularity in the New Kingdom, as seen in the numerous amulets and seals bearing her image. Both her roles and depiction remained quite consistent over time. She remained a composite goddess often wielding protective signs and knives, who occurred often in temple and domestic contexts. Adaptions to her representation were subtle, with the feminine wig to emphasize human femininity and some figurines highlighting her nursing role. New Kingdom seals and bedroom objects tended to depict her similar to Middle Kingdom apotropaia, an aspect also seen in an unprovenanced woman-on-bed figurine and a domestic wall-painting from Amarna.⁵³⁵ As we will discuss below,⁵³⁶ these associations also appeared in some New Kingdom femiform vessels. Along with Bes, she had particular association with bedroom objects, namely headrests, beds frames, small private boxes. Apotropaia, the New Kingdom royal birth depictions, and some bed models also emphasized this characteristic.⁵³⁷

⁵³⁵ MFA 72.739. For wall-painting, see below, 7.5.2.1, Figure 308.

⁵³⁶ See below, § 3.5.1.

⁵³⁷ See below, §§ 3.4, 6.2.16.1, 6.3.2.2.1, and 7.3.2.

2.6 Cobra Wands

Images of deities, especially those of Aha/Bes, from Late Middle Kingdom through early 18th Dynasty magic wands commonly show the figures frequently holding snakes/snake wands. Aha/Bes figures also are depicted holding such snakes in some of the Middle Kingdom figurines. The findings of actual cobra wands, as well as their context as magical devices in various depictions indicates that these were part of apotropaic rituals.

2.6.1 Context

While a number of these wands did not have known context,⁵³⁸ there are four that derived from Middle Kingdom contexts and one from the New Kingdom. These objects occurred primarily in tombs, though excavators found one in Lahun.

Four of the wands have firm Middle Kingdom contexts. The earliest wand, of wood, originated from Deir el-Bersha tomb 13 (Figure 73), dating to the 12th Dynasty.⁵³⁹ Another fragment of a serpent wand is an ivory 12th Dynasty example from Lahun (Figure 74).⁵⁴⁰ This head and body fragment is 12.6 cm long, and has a large inlayed black eye. It has on the top of the body an incised pattern of three horizontal lines each framing a diamond and similar diamonds run down the length of the lower body. Another staff occurred in the Late Middle Kingdom tomb at the Ramesseum (Figure 75).⁵⁴¹ The specific context was a chest that held a whole array of ritual and medical-magical papyri, as well as objects associated with magical practice, including female figurines, ivory wands, and an Ahat statuette holding two cobra

⁵³⁸ R. Ritner, "'And each staff transformed into a snake': The serpent wand in ancient Egypt," in *Through a Glass Darkly: Magic, Dreams, & Prophecy in Ancient Egypt*, ed. K. Szpakowska (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2006), 209-211.

⁵³⁹ MFA 21.11941: Ritner, "Serpent wand," 210-11.

⁵⁴⁰ Griffith, *Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities*, 25. Now Manchester EGY180A.

⁵⁴¹ Quibell, *Ramesseum*, 3 and pl. 3; Ritner, "Serpent wand," Fig. 4.

snakes.⁵⁴² Given the magic-focused context of the tomb, the cobra likely had a related function.⁵⁴³ The cobra has a coiled body, raised hood and incised patterns of lines to indicate the markings of the ventral surface of the hood.⁵⁴⁴ The body of the piece is flattened in the middle and broken, which could possibly indicate use wear if the damage was ancient.⁵⁴⁵ A snake-shaped staff, with body undulating in a great loop, occurred from Hu Tomb Y458 (Figure 76), dating to the late 12 to early 13th Dynasty.⁵⁴⁶

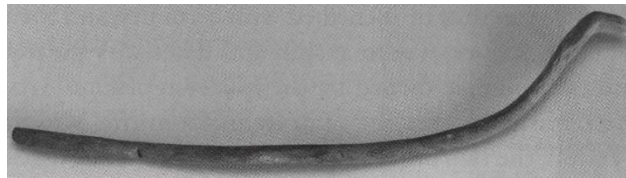


Figure 73 – MFA 21.11941, Deir el Bersha, Tomb 13. Image from Ritner, “Serpent wand,” pl. 2 (MFA 21.11941).



Figure 74 (left) – Manchester 180A, from Lahun. Image accessed from online museum catalogue.

Figure 75 (right) – Fitzwilliam E. 63.1896, from MK tomb under Ramesseum. Image from Quibell, *Ramesseum*, pl. III.4.

⁵⁴² Quibell, *Ramesseum*, 3 and pls. 1-3.

⁵⁴³ Ritner, “Serpent wand,” 206.

⁵⁴⁴ Ritner, “Serpent wand,” 206.

⁵⁴⁵ Ritner, “Serpent wand,” 206-7, contra Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 113.

⁵⁴⁶ Ashmolean E.1907: W. M. F. Petrie, *Diospolis Parva: the cemeteries of Abadiyeh and Hu* (MEEF 20. London; Boston: EEF, 1901), 52, pl. xxxiii.19; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 4.117.

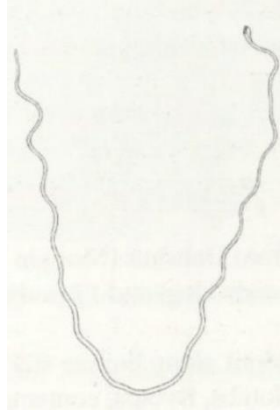


Figure 76 – Snake wand from Hu Tomb 458. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 4.117.

Based on the Ramesseum example, two similar unprovenanced bronze wands from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (Figure 77), measuring 57 cm, are tentatively dated to the 13th Dynasty.⁵⁴⁷ Yet, as Ritner noted, their appearance is rather different from the former.⁵⁴⁸ Each cobra staff had two flaring cobra heads with undifferentiated coiled bodies.

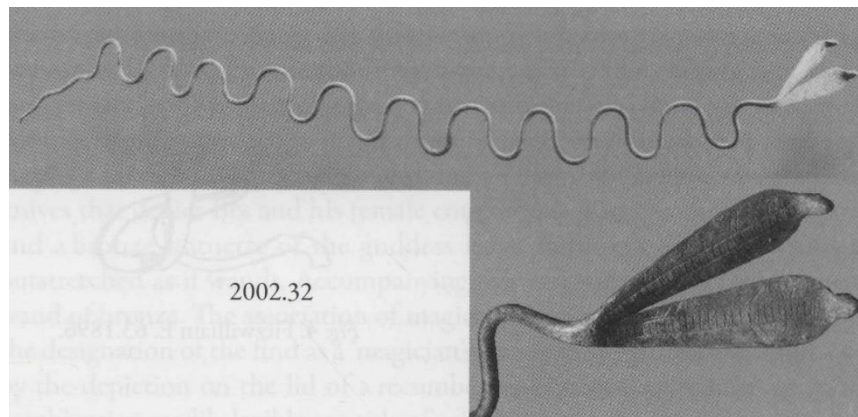


Figure 77 – MFA 2002.32. Image from Ritner, “Serpent wand,” pl. 1.

The next cobra wand with context, measuring at 164 cm in length, came from early 18th Dynasty the anthropoid sarcophagus of Mentuhotep (Figure 78).⁵⁴⁹ The wand is outstretched,

⁵⁴⁷ R. Freed, L.M. Berman, and D. Doxey, *Arts of ancient Egypt* (Boston: MFA Publications, 2003), 137.

⁵⁴⁸ Ritner, “Serpent wand,” 208.

⁵⁴⁹ BM EA 52831: Carnarvon and Carter, *Five Years' Excavations*, 1912, 85, no. 74

similar to the wands held by the Ramesseum Ahat figurine. Its length, 164 cm, is considerably longer than the earlier wands.⁵⁵⁰

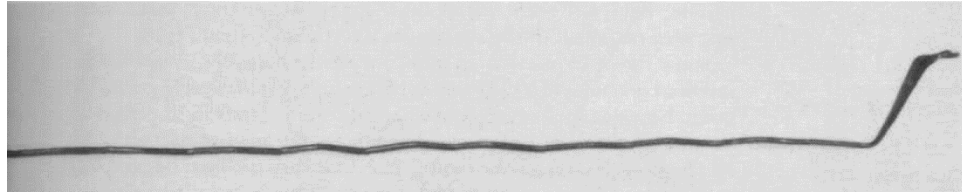


Figure 78 – BM EA 52831. Image from Pinch, *Magic* (1994), fig. 3.

2.6.2 Function

Based on the iconographic data surrounding these objects, Ritner had considered these cobra staffs as ritual implements, embodying the user the power of deities.⁵⁵¹ In addition to apotropaia and figurines of Aha/Bes and Ahat/Beset, there are several representations of deities and humans wielding such cobra wands. For example, it occurred on the wooden box from Rifeh.⁵⁵² From the Middle Kingdom, the representation also occurred on two coffins showing the Book of Two Ways.⁵⁵³ It also occurred in a scene from the tomb of Bebi.⁵⁵⁴ Later depictions from both the Amduat⁵⁵⁵ and Book of Gates⁵⁵⁶ depicted deities holding snakes. Among the bedroom equipment such as three hippopotamus tusks, one scene from the tomb of Rekhmire in the 18th Dynasty,⁵⁵⁷ depicts two winding snake rods in upright position. They are both yellow in color, likely bronze or gold,⁵⁵⁸ and are positioned to the left or right of the bed. In these images,

⁵⁵⁰ Ritner, "Serpent wand," 209.

⁵⁵¹ Ritner, "Serpent wand," 212-215.

⁵⁵² Petrie, *Gizeh and Rifeh*, 20-21 and pl. 24

⁵⁵³ A. De Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts* VII (OIP 87; Chicago: OIP, 1961), plans 1 and 14; L. Lesko, *The ancient Egyptian Book of Two Ways* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 92.

⁵⁵⁴ For this image, see §4.3.2.2.2.

⁵⁵⁵ Ra: Hours 1-2, 4-5, 7-12; other deities: Hour 1 (nos. 70-75). Hornung, *Das Amduat* I, figures.

⁵⁵⁶ 12th Hour, upper register, scene 87 (Sobek-Ra) and 12th Hour, Lower register, Scene 100 ('Keeper of the Cave'): J. Zeidler, *Pfortenbuchstudien Teil II: Kiritische Edition des Pfortenbuches nach den Versionen des Neuen Reiches* (GOF 36, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), 347, 371.

⁵⁵⁷ N. de G. Davies, *The tomb of Rekh-mi-Rē' at Thebes* (New York, 1943), 36.

⁵⁵⁸ Gnirs, "Nilpferstosszähne," 133.

the snake rods are held directly below the head and upright in front of the body or with lowered arm angle beside the body.⁵⁵⁹ Certain forms of Horus cippi also depicted Horus holding cobras and other animals while standing on crocodiles.⁵⁶⁰ Both actual cobra scepters and depictions of such occurred in domestic and funerary contexts, with the apotropaic wands and tomb depictions of both wands and cobra staffs more likely to indicate a birth context. While the object itself did not specifically symbolize birth, the evidence above suggests it was a ritual device often used birth and fertility magic from the Middle Kingdom to the early New Kingdom.

2.7 Conclusions

From the available evidence, access to these birth deities remained relatively consistent. Certain object types, namely amulets, became more popular in the New Kingdom in a pattern consistent with the greater prevalence of amulets generally during this period (Table 9).⁵⁶¹ This pattern may be due to a greater allowance of birth material in domestic contexts, as well as a revival in the leaving of votive objects in temples within Egypt.⁵⁶² While the function of certain deities on objects is clearer than others, a number of objects indicate the major roles these figures served in Egyptian concepts of childbirth and fertility.

Given Hathor's greater complexity and expanded role in the Egyptian pantheon, it is generally difficult to distinguish which function an image or object invoked. During the Middle Kingdom, she did not occur on many objects with a possible fertility/birth meaning. The Abydos birth brick, Type A nude female figurines, and cowrie shells invoked her, but she did not appear in the apotropaia. These representations were all indirect, rather than directly showing the

⁵⁵⁹ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.6; Altenmüller, "Totengluaben," 131, n. 2

⁵⁶⁰ H. Sternberg-el-Hotabi, "Horusstele des Anchpacherd, Sohn des Djedheriuefanch," *SÄK* 16 (1989): 275-87; Ritner, *Mechanics*, 106-7, with notes 518-25, and 128 n. 583.

⁵⁶¹ Table derived from excavated objects with firm dating. The bars on the graph correspond to the number of objects with known contexts.

⁵⁶² See below, § 8.2.1.

goddess herself. However, we know from Berlin 3027 spells E, H, and N that Hathor had a birth role in the Middle Kingdom. Given Hathor's role as a goddess associated with royalty, Egyptians may have placed more restrictions on the type of imagery of her allowed, mainly limiting direct appearances in private-owned material to her funerary aspect.

Table 9 – Chronological Distribution of Statuettes and Amulets of Birth Deities

[illegible]

During the New Kingdom, those restrictions seemed to have relaxed, given her greater presence in private material, particularly in domestic and temple contexts. In these areas, she retained human features, either as a head with cow ears or a fully humanoid form. Material using her more birth-related title “Mistress of the Vulva” during this period include a private stela and a domestic ancestor bust.⁵⁶³ This shift to more domestic contexts reflected a larger pattern in birth and fertility objects. Likewise, the New Kingdom rise of a standardized birth iconography included a greater prominence of depictions of women, in contrast to the more distinct solar birth and female fertility imagery characteristic of the Middle Kingdom.⁵⁶⁴

Similar difficulties in interpretation occur in objects bearing the image of frogs, which could either have invoked the birth-goddess Heqet or some other frog deity. At least one apotropaic wand gives her name, and the frog goddess often appeared on wands, cups, and cubic rod segments. In the New Kingdom, frog objects occurred more often in domestic and temple

⁵⁶³ For the latter, see below, § 3.2.9, Figure 153.

⁵⁶⁴ See Chapters 3, 4, 6, and 7.

contexts, likely representing Heqet. The shift away from figurines to frog scaraboids during this period likely reflected this domestication. Through both periods, her iconography as a squatting frog remained consistent. Her role as a birth goddess likewise remained constant, with her hastening births in Papyrus Westcar and aiding the child's birth in the New Kingdom royal birth scenes.

The first significant occurrence of Aha/Bes was during the Middle Kingdom, particularly in apotropaic wands and figurines. After shifting his appearance from a slimmer leonine figure to a more standard dwarfish form, his popularity greatly increased in the New Kingdom, likely due to a greater allowance of domestic birth material. As we will discuss below,⁵⁶⁵ this development subsumed the previous fertility connotations of Middle Kingdom dwarf figures, particularly examples holding pottery or musical instruments. Some New Kingdom depictions still represented him holding snakes, especially bedroom-related furniture. Throughout these periods, the deity remained a predominantly household deity, with his occurrence on objects associated with the bedroom like headrests as well as household cult items like the mask. His bedroom associated led to him becoming especially prominent in the birth-bed iconography of the New Kingdom.⁵⁶⁶ In both periods, the deity was geographically widespread throughout Egypt and beyond. A female version of this deity, Ahat/Beset, appeared as early as the Late Middle Kingdom, especially on the ivory wands, though she became relatively rare in the New Kingdom.

Ipet/Taweret, who similarly appeared on household-related objects, likewise rose in popularity in the New Kingdom. Throughout the Middle Kingdom through New Kingdom, this composite hippopotamus figure had differing names: Ipet, Reret, and finally Taweret. Unlike Aha/Bes, she did not see significant changes in her overall form. This consistency is similar to

⁵⁶⁵ § 3.1.2.

⁵⁶⁶ See below, §§ 3.3; 7.3.2; 7.4.1; 7.5.2.1.

that of the other main birth goddesses. Along with Aha/Bes, she remained holding the *s3*, *ʿnh*, or knives in the New Kingdom, particularly on beds and headrests. This more conservative form likely reflected their previous association with bedroom objects in the Middle Kingdom. Amulets featuring the goddess shifted from the schematic type of the Middle Kingdom to more detailed types of the New Kingdom, though they still emphasized the hippopotamus-head and pregnant belly. Her poses in figurines became more varied during this time, most notably a nursing type and a depiction alongside a woman. These forms, along with a change to a tripartite wig instead of the leonine mane, emphasized her connection with women. While some had attempted to see the goddess in the figurines and amulets of hippopotami, the association remains uncertain, with the objects possibly linked to another hippopotamus deity, such as Seth.

A number of deities, particular those on apotropaic objects, held cobra wands. While some physical examples of such cobra wands are preserved, the object type appeared more frequently in illustrated representations. These cobra wands typically invoked the power of the divine user, who used these cobras as weapons against enemies. A number of these snake-wielding deities, such as Aha/Bes, had associations with the sun god and often served to protect the sun on his nightly journey in the underworld. This relationship is significant given the frequent occurrence of knife-wielding deities on wands, cups, and some figurines of Bes and dwarfs. The cobra wand thus seemed to have functioned as part of the repertoire of imagery related to solar rebirth, which, as discussed below,⁵⁶⁷ Egyptians linked to the birth of a child. With the exception of beds and headrests, illustrations of the cobra staff past the early 18th Dynasty generally did not relate to birth. This decline may be due to a shift in New Kingdom birth iconography away from solar rebirth imagery.⁵⁶⁸

⁵⁶⁷ See Chapter 6, especially §§ 6.2 and 6.3.3.2.

⁵⁶⁸ See below, esp. § 8.3.1.

In addition to particular medical-magical spells and objects where these deities were the sole or primary image, Hathor, Hekat, Aha/Bes, and Ipet/Taweret occurred frequently on a number of objects which will be discussed in subsequent chapters. Given their association with fertility and childbirth, their appearance on figurines, ostraca, cubic rods, royal birth scenes, and the Abydos birth brick are significant. In addition to these deities, representations of humans or human body-parts served as models for fertility and birth. Some of these human depictions include features or full illustrations of the birth divinities, while figures of the gods can subsume previous human forms. These human models include various figurines, shaped pebbles, and pottery vessels. Like the birth deities, most of these representations were of women, though some were showed men or male features.

Chapter 3: Human Fertility

Egyptians throughout various periods utilized representations of the human form to invoke fertility. This imagery can include body parts such as vulvae and breasts, as well as full figures with fertility-related features emphasized and models of possible birth-beds. While the vast majority of the iconography represented feminine forms, certain dwarf figurines and figured pebbles represented male figures or body-parts. Our discussion includes dwarf figures, nude female figurines, bed models, shaped pebbles, and woman-shaped pottery vessels.

3.1 Dwarfs

Dwarf figurines and dwarf-figure jar stands, predominantly found in tombs and temples, occurred more frequently during the Middle Kingdom than the New Kingdom. As we will discuss below, the former appear to have originated from Old Kingdom parallels. Their association with Aha/Bes, the domestic context of dwarf jar stands, and the representation of some dwarfs holding children indicate these objects had association with fertility.

3.1.1 Middle Kingdom Dwarfs

Dwarves in the Middle Kingdom are an example of the trend of archaism during the period, borrowing beliefs and material culture from the Early Dynastic. While a number of dwarf figurines occurred in tombs, they were prevalent in the Temple of Obelisks in Byblos (Tables 10-11).⁵⁶⁹ The majority came from the cemeteries at Lisht, with a couple from Deir el-Bersha and Abydos, and one found in Beni Hasan, Harageh, Badari, and Thebes. Most are nude, with shaven heads, sometimes with black dots for hair. Features such as belts, necklaces, and fingernails are painted black. The few that are of ivory or wood tended to have a realistic style.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁹ For relevancy of the Byblos finds, see above, § 2.1.

⁵⁷⁰ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 137.

Although the connection between dwarves and fertility and childbirth is not always clear, the Middle Kingdom figurines seem to have had a fertility function, since they do not appear with features associated with Ptah.⁵⁷¹ Scholars previously assumed these figures were servant toys,⁵⁷² but they appear to have had association with Aha/Bes. Since dwarfs during ancient times rarely survived into adulthood, Egyptians possibly viewed adult dwarfs as symbolic of surviving birth and childhood.⁵⁷³ Likewise, as some scholars noted, their physical features, such as nudity, bulging bellies, and bodily ornaments such as belts and pendants, are similar to contemporary nude female figurines.⁵⁷⁴ These characteristics separate these figures from other human statuettes, emphasizing fecundity.

Already during the Predynastic to Old Kingdom, dwarfs occurred on a funerary vessel,⁵⁷⁵ a seal,⁵⁷⁶ and as votive statuettes.⁵⁷⁷ As Raven had noted, the seal represents the earliest evidence for the connection between dwarves and dangerous animals.⁵⁷⁸ Notable in light of some of the later Middle Kingdom dwarf figurines is one of the votives from Hierakonpolis, which appears to represent a pregnant dwarf (Figure 79).⁵⁷⁹ Other early figurines depicted dwarfs holding

⁵⁷¹ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 89.

⁵⁷² Hayes, *Scepter* I, 221-3; A. Badawy, "La Grotesque: invention égyptienne," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 66 (1965): 189-98.

⁵⁷³ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 89; L.D. Gómez, "Bes, Ptah y Ptah-Pataeco," in *Actas del III Congreso español de Antiguo Oriente Próximo: Huelva, del 30 de septiembre al 3 de octubre de 2003*, Vol. 2, ed. C. García Sanz and P. Rufete Tomico (Huelva arqueológica 19-20. Huelva : Diputación provincial de Huelva, 2004), 136.

⁵⁷⁴ Baines, *Fecundity figures*, 94-95; Gómez, "Bes, Ptah y Ptah-Pataeco," 137.

⁵⁷⁵ Quibell, *Archaic Objects*, 116 and pl. 22, no. 11557; Ballod, *Prolegomena*, 37 Abb. 12; G.D. Hornblower, "Funerary designs on predynastic jars," *JEA* 16 (1930): 14-16.

⁵⁷⁶ Quibell, *Archaic Objects*, 279 no. 14518; Ballod, *Prolegomena*, 37, Abb. 13.

⁵⁷⁷ Quibell, *Hierakonpolis* I, 7, and pls. XI, XVII.7 and XVIII.19; E. Naville, "Figurines égyptiennes de l'époque archaïque," *RecTrav* 22 (1900): pl. V; W. M. F. Petrie, *Abydos* II (MEEF 24; London: EEF, 1903), pls. V.48 and X.213; Ballod, *Prolegomena*, 37-38 Abb. 14; Vandier, *Manuel* I, 970-971 and fig. 643; Adams, *Ancient Hierakonpolis*, 113 (Ashmolean E 10); A. Buszek, "Dwarf Figurines from Tell el-Farkha," *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 12 (2008): 35-55.

⁵⁷⁸ Raven, "A puzzling pataekos," 9.

⁵⁷⁹ Quibell, *Hierakonpolis* I, 7 and pl. IX.

children, similar to those from the Middle Kingdom (Figure 80).⁵⁸⁰ To Dasen, the former recalls the role of Bes in protecting children.⁵⁸¹

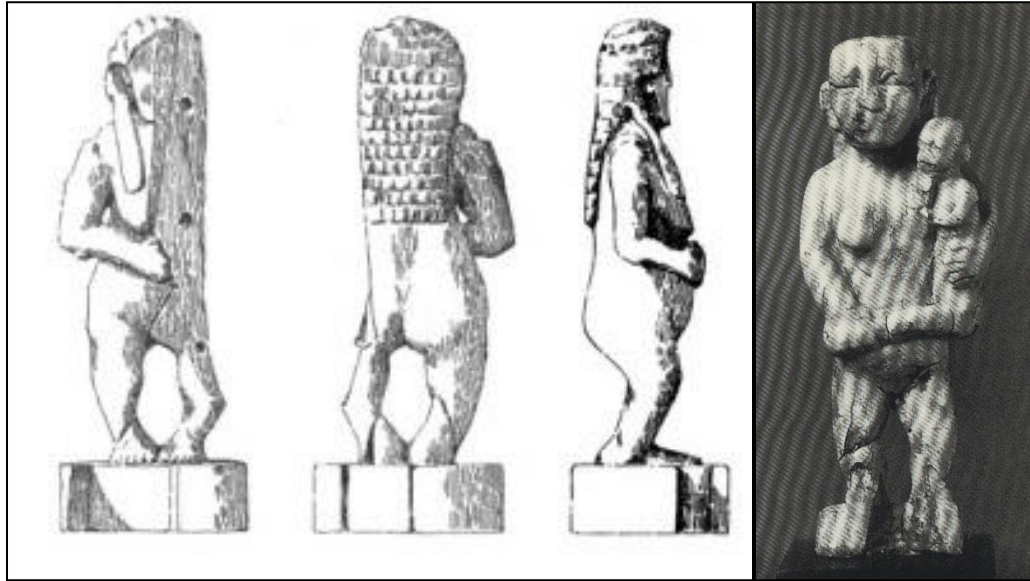


Figure 79 (left) – Hierakonpolis pregnant dwarf. Image from Quibell, *Hierakonpolis I*, pl. 9.
Figure 80 (right) – Early Dynastic female dwarf with child. Image from Wenig, *Woman in Egyptian Art*, pl. 4.

Male dwarf statuettes most commonly depicted the figure standing, either with arms hanging at the sides or raising one or more of his arms, resting a hand on the belly (Figure 81), or holding pottery vessels. The latter motif appears to derive from the Old Kingdom theme of the dwarf bearer, showing jars on the shoulder or the figure carrying pottery vessels (Figure 83).⁵⁸² In addition, there is some association with music, such as MMA 22.1.1140,⁵⁸³ which held a tambourine and kneeled in a pose resembling New Kingdom amuletic Bes musicians.⁵⁸⁴ Though more of a type associated with the temple, one of the figures carried a calf (Figure 82). This

⁵⁸⁰ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, 108-9, Cat. E 93 and d 111; S. Wenig, *The woman in Egyptian Art* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), pl. 4.

⁵⁸¹ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, 105.

⁵⁸² Dasen, *Dwarves*, 138.

⁵⁸³ A. Rupp, "Der Zwerg in der agyptischen Gemeinschaft," *CdÉ* 40 (1965): 303 (1)-(15); Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 167, A15; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 222; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 132.

⁵⁸⁴ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 139-140.

quadruped may have symbolized the newborn sun god Re,⁵⁸⁵ indicating that the dwarf's role was to protect the newborn.⁵⁸⁶ Such a figure is also similar to the Old Kingdom tomb scenes of herdsmen fording the river with their cattle.⁵⁸⁷ Five figurines from Byblos represented the dwarf with a large phallus, which perhaps implied male fertility similar to depictions of male fertility god Min.



Figure 81 (left) – Dwarf with hands on belly. Image from Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, pl. XCVII, no. 15319.

Figure 82 (middle) – Dwarf carrying a calf. Image from Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, pl. XCVIII, no. 15338.

Figure 83 (right) – MMA 22.1.177. Image from Dasen, *Dwarfs*, pl. 33.3.

Table 10 - Middle Kingdom Male Dwarf Figurines

CTX	Site	Clothes	Legs	Arms	Details	Mat.	Object.
Tomb	Abydos	Nude	standing on base	right arm raised, left on belly	necklace and pendant painted black	glazed ware	Oxford AM E 4287 ⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸⁵ Raven, “A puzzling pataekos,” 12. On symbolism of calves, P. Behrens, “Kalb,” *LÄ* III (1980), 296-7.

⁵⁸⁶ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 138-139.

⁵⁸⁷ Ritner, *Mechanics*, 226-227.

⁵⁸⁸ Tomb 416. Kemp and Merillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 138-9, fig. 44, pls. 13-14; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 147.

Tomb	Badari	Nude	N/A			glazed ware	N/A ⁵⁸⁹
Tomb	El-Riqqa	long kilt			wig	limest.	MMA 14.4.47 ⁵⁹⁰
Tomb	Harageh	Nude	Standing	hands raised		glazed ware	UC 18745 ⁵⁹¹
Tomb	Lisht N.	Nude	standing on base	drinking from vessel	bald	glazed ware	MMA 22.1.286 ⁵⁹²
Tomb	Lisht N.	Nude	standing on base	holding a pot on each shoulder		glazed ware	MMA 22.1.177 ⁵⁹³
Tomb	Lisht N.	Nude	semi-postrate	holding a vessel under chin	on base	glazed ware	MMA 22.1.124 ⁵⁹⁴
Tomb	Lisht N.	Nude	Standing	holding object in front of him		glazed ware	MMA 22.1.179 ⁵⁹⁵
Tomb	Lisht N.	Nude	squatting on base	holding tambourine(?) on knees		glazed ware	MMA 22.1.1140 ⁵⁹⁶
Tomb	Lisht N.	Nude	Standing	left hand on belly, right in mouth		glazed ware	MMA 22.1.125 ⁵⁹⁷
Tomb	Lisht N.	Nude	standing on base			glazed ware	MMA 15.3.60 ⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁸⁹ Tomb 4909, owner a young child. Brunton, *Qau and Badari*, I, 41, 64, pl. XXIX.15; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 145.

⁵⁹⁰ Weeks, *Anatomical Knowledge*, 171, B8; R. Engelbach, *Riqqeh and Memphis*, IV (BSAE 26; London: Quaritch, 1915), 16, pl. XII, nos. 8-9; Hayes, *Scepter*, I, 210; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 135.

⁵⁹¹ Engelbach, *Harageh*, 12, pl. XIV, no. 9 (tomb 55); Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 144, pl. 33.3.

⁵⁹² Tomb 964. Rupp, "Zwerg," 303(1)-(15); Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 167, A14; Hornemann, *Types*, 919; Hayes, *Scepter*, I, 222; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 131. Dasen listed it as "holding an object in front of him," but the shape of the object and the dwarf's tongue sticking out indicates he's drinking from a vessel.

⁵⁹³ Tomb 885. Rupp, "Zwerg," 303(1)-(15); Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 167, A13; Hayes, *Scepter*, I, 222; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 129, pl. 32.2.

⁵⁹⁴ Pit 884. Found on museum online catalog 5/1/2015.

⁵⁹⁵ Tomb 885. Rupp, "Zwerg," 303(1)-(15); Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 168, A17; Hayes, *Scepter*, I, 222; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 130.

⁵⁹⁶ Rupp, "Zwerg," 303 (1)-(15); Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 167, A15; Hayes, *Scepter*, I, 222; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 132.

⁵⁹⁷ Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 170, B5; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 128.

⁵⁹⁸ Tomb 333. Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 170, B4; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 126.

Tomb	Thebes	Nude	standing	carrying calf on shoulders		ivory	N/A ⁵⁹⁹
Temple	Byblos	Nude	N/A	a monkey(?) sits on shoulders		glazed ware	Dunand 15318 ⁶⁰⁰
Temple	Byblos	Nude	N/A	carrying animal sits on shoulders		glazed ware	Dunand 15342 ⁶⁰¹
Temple	Byblos	Nude	N/A	carrying quadruped		glazed ware	Dunand 15336 ⁶⁰²
Temple	Byblos	Nude	half-kneeling	carrying quadruped on shoulders		glazed ware	Dunand 15338 ⁶⁰³
Temple	Byblos	Nude	N/A	carrying quadruped on shoulders		glazed ware	Dunand 15339 ⁶⁰⁴
Temple	Byblos	Nude	standing	carrying quadruped on shoulders		glazed ware	Dunand 15347 ⁶⁰⁵
Temple	Byblos	Nude	N/A	holding a vessel		glazed ware	Dunand 15344 ⁶⁰⁶
Temple	Byblos	Nude	squatting	holding a vessel		glazed ware	Dunand 15340 ⁶⁰⁷
Temple	Byblos	Nude	kneeling	holding a vessel (?)		glazed ware	Dunand 15316 ⁶⁰⁸
Temple	Byblos	Nude	kneeling	holding a vessel (?)		glazed ware	Dunand 15317 ⁶⁰⁹
Temple	Byblos	Nude	N/A	holding a vessel (?)		glazed ware	Dunand 15325 ⁶¹⁰
Temple	Byblos	Nude	squatting (?)	holding a vessel (?)		glazed ware	Dunand 15322 ⁶¹¹

⁵⁹⁹ Quibell, *The Ramesseum*, 3, pl. II, nos. 1-2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 148.

⁶⁰⁰ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 159.

⁶⁰¹ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 179.

⁶⁰² Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 174.

⁶⁰³ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVII; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 176.

⁶⁰⁴ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 177.

⁶⁰⁵ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 183.

⁶⁰⁶ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVIII; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 181.

⁶⁰⁷ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVIII; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 178.

⁶⁰⁸ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVI; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 157.

⁶⁰⁹ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 158.

⁶¹⁰ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 166.

⁶¹¹ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 163.

Temple	Byblos	Nude	squatting	holding elongated object		glazed ware	Dunand 15320 ⁶¹²
Temple	Byblos	Nude	squatting	holding elongated object		glazed ware	Dunand 15324 ⁶¹³
Temple	Byblos	Nude	squatting	holding object		glazed ware	Dunand 15326 ⁶¹⁴
Temple	Byblos	Nude	squatting	holding object		glazed ware	Dunand 15329 ⁶¹⁵
Temple	Byblos	Nude	standing	holding tambourine/dish in right hand, vessel in left		glazed ware	Dunand 15343 ⁶¹⁶
Temple	Byblos	Nude	squatting (?)	raised to head		glazed ware	Dunand 15337 ⁶¹⁷
Temple	Byblos	Nude	kneeling	right hand to head	oversized penis	glazed ware	Dunand 15327 ⁶¹⁸
Temple	Byblos	Nude	standing	right hand to mouth		glazed ware	Dunand 15312 ⁶¹⁹
Temple	Byblos	Nude	kneeling			glazed ware	Dunand 15321 ⁶²⁰
Temple	Byblos	Nude	kneeling			glazed ware	Dunand 15311 ⁶²¹
Temple	Byblos	Nude	kneeling			glazed ware	Dunand 15333 ⁶²²
Temple	Byblos	Nude	lying on back		oversized penis	glazed ware	Dunand 15359 ⁶²³
Temple	Byblos	Nude	lying on back			glazed ware	Dunand 15354 ⁶²⁴
Temple	Byblos	Nude	lying on back			glazed ware	Dunand 15355 ⁶²⁵

⁶¹² Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVI; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 161.

⁶¹³ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 165.

⁶¹⁴ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 167.

⁶¹⁵ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 169.

⁶¹⁶ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 180.

⁶¹⁷ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVII; Dasen, Cat. *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 175.

⁶¹⁸ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVIII; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 168.

⁶¹⁹ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVII; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 153.

⁶²⁰ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 162.

⁶²¹ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 152.

⁶²² Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVII; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 173.

⁶²³ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 190.

⁶²⁴ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVI; Dasen, Cat. *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 187.

⁶²⁵ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 188.

Temple	Byblos	Nude	squatting		puffed wig(?)	glazed ware	Dunand 15349 ⁶²⁶
Temple	Byblos	Nude	squatting			glazed ware	Dunand 15314 ⁶²⁷
Temple	Byblos	Nude	squatting			glazed ware	Dunand 15319 ⁶²⁸
Temple	Byblos	Nude	standing		hair divided into three strands	glazed ware	Dunand 15345 ⁶²⁹
Temple	Byblos	Nude	standing		hair divided into three strands	glazed ware	Dunand 15348 ⁶³⁰
Temple	Byblos	Nude	standing		oversized penis	glazed ware	Dunand 15309 ⁶³¹
Temple	Byblos	Nude	standing		oversized penis	glazed ware	Dunand 15310 ⁶³²
Temple	Byblos	Nude	standing		oversized penis	glazed ware	Dunand 15315 ⁶³³
Temple	Byblos	Nude	standing		plaque, seen in profile	glazed ware	Dunand 15356 ⁶³⁴
Temple	Byblos	Nude	standing			glazed ware	Dunand 15313 ⁶³⁵
Temple	Byblos	Nude	standing			glazed ware	Dunand 15350 ⁶³⁶
Temple	Byblos	Nude	standing (?)			glazed ware	Dunand 15323 ⁶³⁷
Town	Lahun	N/A	N/A	playing double pipe		glazed ware	UC 16684 ⁶³⁸

⁶²⁶ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVIII; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 185.

⁶²⁷ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 155.

⁶²⁸ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVII; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 160.

⁶²⁹ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVIII; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 182.

⁶³⁰ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 184.

⁶³¹ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 150.

⁶³² Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 151.

⁶³³ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 156.

⁶³⁴ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 189.

⁶³⁵ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVII; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 154.

⁶³⁶ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 186.

⁶³⁷ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 164.

⁶³⁸ Petrie, *KGH*, 31, pl. VIII, no. 9; Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 139; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 141.

Unclear	unprov.	Kilt	standing	right first clenched, palm turned outwards	plinth does not belong to statue	wood	Louvre E 14696 ⁶³⁹
Unclear	unprov.	N/A	N/A	drinking from vessel	bald	glazed ware	UC 45086 ⁶⁴⁰
Unclear	unprov.	N/A	N/A	N/A	eyes and brows painted in black	glazed ware	UC 45082 ⁶⁴¹
Unclear	unprov.	Nude	kneeling	carrying calf on shoulders		glazed ware	MFA 11.1524 ⁶⁴²
Unclear	unprov.	Nude	squatting	drinking from vessel		glazed ware	BM 65679 ⁶⁴³
Unclear	unprov.	Nude	squatting	hands over ears	necklace and belt painted black	glazed ware	Fitz. E FG 37 ⁶⁴⁴
Unclear	unprov.	Nude	standing on base	right arm on chest		ivory	BM 58409 ⁶⁴⁵
Unclear	unprov.	Nude	standing	at sides	necklace and belt painted black	glazed ware	Cambridge FM E 60.1984 ⁶⁴⁶
Unclear	unprov.	Nude	standing			glazed ware	BM 22882 ⁶⁴⁷

The female dwarf figurines primarily represented the woman standing or squatting, with some seated examples. The hair is either a puffed wig (Figure 86-7) or plaits at the back of the head. For both hair types, there are examples of the woman holding a child (Figures 84 and 87), five in total. One such figurine (Figure 84),⁶⁴⁸ was excavated from the same tomb as a standing

⁶³⁹ Vandier, *Manuel*, III, 239, pl. LXXXII.1; A. Leca, *La médecine Égyptienne au temps des pharaons* (Paris: Dacosta, 1971), 170-2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 197, pl. 34.3a,b.

⁶⁴⁰ Found on museum website.

⁶⁴¹ Found on museum website.

⁶⁴² Hornemann, *Types*, 1339; Kemp and Merillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 139; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 191.

⁶⁴³ E. Denison Ross, *The Art of Egypt through the ages* (London: The Studio Ltd., 1931), 150, fig. 1; Kemp and Merillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 139; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 196.

⁶⁴⁴ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, pl. 33.4; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 193.

⁶⁴⁵ Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 171, B9; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 195, pl. 35.1a, b.

⁶⁴⁶ Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 121-2, no. 114; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 192.

⁶⁴⁷ Denison Ross, *The Art of Egypt through the ages*, 150, fig. 1 (third from left); Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 194.

⁶⁴⁸ Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 122-123, no. 115, dating to the late 12th-13th Dynasties.

lion statuette. Bourriau had presumed that its plaited hairstyle was indicative of young girls and women of subordinate status.⁶⁴⁹ An unprovenanced example from the Harer Family Trust has one child on her back while holding a child to her breast. Another variation is MMA 15.3.887, where the figure holds a child in each arm. The nurse figures, wearing wigs of long hair or having three long plaits and wearing belts and necklaces, evoked the Type A2 nude female figurines, likely sharing the same function ensuring female fertility and childbirth.⁶⁵⁰ Certain dwarf figurines have a tripartite wig (figure 85).



Figure 84 (left) – Female dwarf with plait hairstyle, holding child. Image from Oppenheim et al., *Ancient Egypt Transformed*, Cat. 134.

Figure 85 (middle) – Female dwarf from Deir el-Bersha, Cairo JdE 34.299. Image from Dasen, *Dwarfs*, fig. 9.22.

Figure 86 (right) – Female dwarf with puffed wig. Image from Dasen, *Dwarfs*, pl. 32.4.

⁶⁴⁹ Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 123.

⁶⁵⁰ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 140-141.



Figure 87 – Female dwarf figurines holding children, from Lisht. Image from Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, pl. 22c.

Table 11 - Middle Kingdom Female Dwarf Figurines

CTX	Site	Clothes	Legs	Arms	Details	Mat.	Object
Tomb	Deir el-Bersha	Nude	standing		lock over shoulder	wood	Cairo, JdE 34.298 ⁶⁵¹
Tomb	Deir el-Bersha	Nude	standing		lock over shoulders	wood	Cairo, JdE 24.299 ⁶⁵²
Tomb	Abydos	Nude	standing	holding child in left arm; right originally held object	three plaits in back	wood	Liverpool GM E 7081 ⁶⁵³
Tomb	Lisht North	Nude	standing on base	at sides	long hair over each shoulder and back	glazed ware	MMA 22.1.1163 ⁶⁵⁴
Tomb	Lisht North	Nude	standing on base	at sides	three plaits in back, necklace, bracelets,	glazed ware	MMA 1972.48 ⁶⁵⁵

⁶⁵¹ PM IV, 184 (tomb of Sithedjhotep); Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 172-3, B13, f.14; P. Schrupf-Pierron, "Les nains achondroplastiques dans l'ancienne Égypte," *Aesculape* 24.9 (1934): 230, fig. 8; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 120.

⁶⁵² PM IV, 184 (tomb of Sithedjhotep); Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 173, B15; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 121, fig. 9.22.

⁶⁵³ Locus 352. Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 122-3, no. 115; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 146, pl. 34.2.

⁶⁵⁴ Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 170, B6.

⁶⁵⁵ Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 139; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 134, pl. 33.2.

					nails and pubic hair painted black		
Tomb	Lisht North	Nude	seated	holding child in left arm; right supports another child	three plaits in back	glazed ware	MMA 15.3.887 ⁶⁵⁶
Tomb	Lisht North ⁶⁵⁷	Nude	standing	N/A	N/A	wood	MMA15.3.414
Tomb	Lisht South	Dress	squatting	holding child in left arm	puffed wig	glazed ware	MMA 24.1.49 ⁶⁵⁸
Tomb	Lisht South	Dress	standing	holding child in left arm	puffed wig	glazed ware	MMA 24.1.47 ⁶⁵⁹
Tomb	Lisht South	Dress	standing	holding child in left arm	puffed wig	glazed ware	MMA 24.1.48 ⁶⁶⁰
Temple	Byblos		standing	arms raised on head	puffed wig	glazed ware	Dunand 15330 ⁶⁶¹
Temple	Byblos		standing	arms raised on head	puffed wig	glazed ware	Dunand 15332 ⁶⁶²
Temple	Byblos		squatting	left hand on head	puffed wig	glazed ware	Dunand 15331 ⁶⁶³
Unclear	Luxor?	Nude	standing	arms spread out	short wig	lead	loc. unknown ⁶⁶⁴

⁶⁵⁶ Accessed on museum online catalog 5/1/2016.

⁶⁵⁷ Tomb 809. Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 123; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 127.

⁶⁵⁸ Tomb west side of pyramid of Senwosret I. Hornemann, *Types*, 1264; A. Lansing, "The Museum's Excavations at Lisht." *BMMA* 19/12.2 (1924): f. 2 (middle row, middle); Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, pl. 22 (upper row, middle); Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 125.

⁶⁵⁹ Tomb west side of pyramid of Senwosret I. Hornemann, *Types*, 1248; Lansing, "Museum's Excavations at Lisht," 37-8, 35, f.2 (middle row, second to left); Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 167, pl. 22 (upper row, first to left); Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 123, pl. 30.3.

⁶⁶⁰ Tomb west side of pyramid of Senwosret I. Hornemann, *Types*, 1260; Lansing, "Museum's Excavations at Lisht," f.2 (middle row, second to right); Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, pl. 22 (upper row, first to right); Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 124, pl. 30.4.

⁶⁶¹ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 170.

⁶⁶² Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2, pl. XCVII; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 172.

⁶⁶³ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II.2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 171.

⁶⁶⁴ Schrupf-Pierron, "Les nains achondroplastiques," 234, fig. 16.

Unclear	unprov.	crossed straps	standing	hands on belly	puffed wig; details, including traces of bead necklace, painted black	glazed ware	RMO F 1988/1.1 ⁶⁶⁵
Unclear	unprov.	Nude	standing on a base	at sides	tripartite wig, eyes, and brows painted black	glazed ware	UC 45087 ⁶⁶⁶
Unclear	unprov.	Nude	standing	holding child to breast	bald, another child clings to back	wood	Harer Family Trust ⁶⁶⁷

Previous scholars had generally assumed these figurines were a type of servant figure,⁶⁶⁸ with Bourriau supposing a maid or nurse,⁶⁶⁹ which also functioned as an image of fertility and sexuality given the presence of the child. Yet, many of the statuettes had a similar appearance to Ptah-Pataikos,⁶⁷⁰ with poses such as holding their hands open, either with arms raised⁶⁷¹ or along the body.⁶⁷² These poses may have expressed submission, praise, or prayer.⁶⁷³ The corpulent bellies seen on both male and female dwarf statuettes recalls the appearance of Ipet and fecundity figures.⁶⁷⁴ These characteristics, in addition to the similarity of the female dwarves to fertility

⁶⁶⁵ M.J. Raven, "Recent Acquisitions I. Egypt," *OMRO* 69 (1989): 8.

⁶⁶⁶ Accessed on museum online catalog 5/1/2016.

⁶⁶⁷ L. Schwappach, "Homelife," in *Women of the Nile* (San Jose: Rosicrucian Egyptian museum, 1999), 15.

⁶⁶⁸ Hayes, *Scepter* I, 221-3; Badawy, "Le Grotesque," 189-98.

⁶⁶⁹ Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 123.

⁶⁷⁰ Brunton, *Qau and Badari* I, 64; Engelbach, *Harageh*, 12.

⁶⁷¹ MMA 1972.48.

⁶⁷² Cairo JE 34.298; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 133-4.

⁶⁷³ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 140.

⁶⁷⁴ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 140. For the significance of large bellies, see Baines, *Fecundity Figures*, 95-7, 127.

figurines, indicate that these statuettes may have served as apotropaia for women and children in life and for the deceased in connection to rebirth.⁶⁷⁵

The find contexts of the dwarf figurines reinforce this birth hypothesis, with female dwarfs from Deir el-Bersha excavated from the tomb of a woman while a figurine from Badari occurred in a tomb of a very young child.⁶⁷⁶ In Lisht, one such figurine was located in a tomb along with four fertility figurines and a statuette of Taweret.⁶⁷⁷ Other graves had small faience models of animals and those of dwarves.⁶⁷⁸ As we will discuss below, some of these animals recall those depicted on the birth wands and may have had similar protective functions.⁶⁷⁹

The contemporary dwarf stands (Table 12), like the other Middle Kingdom dwarf statuettes, seem to also have been associated with fertility and protective concepts.⁶⁸⁰ In Lahun, excavators found several large stands, made of clay or limestone, carved in the shape of a nude dwarf, mostly male with a few female versions (Figure 88 [left]). They typically have flat heads with protruding ears, pendulous breasts, and short bent legs. They derived from the motif of the dwarf bearer, with some supporting a dish or a cup with both arms or a vessel on top of the head (Figure 89), with occasionally two dwarves standing back to back (Figures 88 [right] and 90). Petrie found similar stands with dishes on top as columns with plain or lotus capitals, so to Petrie these stands stood to hold “household offerings of daily bread.”⁶⁸¹

Similar to the dwarf figures from tomb and temple contexts, the stands occurred in a context in association with other apotropaic and fertility-related objects, namely two crude figures

⁶⁷⁵ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 140-141.

⁶⁷⁶ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 141.

⁶⁷⁷ A. Lansing and W. C. Hayes, “The Egyptian Expedition: Excavations at Lisht,” *BMMA* 29/11.2 (1934): 30, 35, fig. 29.

⁶⁷⁸ Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 112, 115-58, 160-2 (E 147).

⁶⁷⁹ See § 6.4.

⁶⁸⁰ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 90.

⁶⁸¹ Petrie, *IKG*, 11; Petrie, *KGH*, 26.

of Taweret.⁶⁸² This range of material was similar to that of the domestic cult in Deir el-Medina, with large Bes jars recalling the form of the dwarf-shaped stands and may have been similarly apotropaic.⁶⁸³ One interesting unprovenanced stand (Figure 91) from the Rijksmuseum (F 1984/11.3) depicts a female dwarf with short bent legs and prominent belly in the same pose associated with the figures on wands and, in particular, Aha figurines of the Middle Kingdom:⁶⁸⁴ grasping snakes in each fist.⁶⁸⁵ The top of the head is carved with a shallow circular cavity, indicating its use as a stand.⁶⁸⁶ To Raven, the dwarfish proportions, the pregnant belly, and the handling of snakes indicates that this domestic item may have served an apotropaic function for the family.⁶⁸⁷

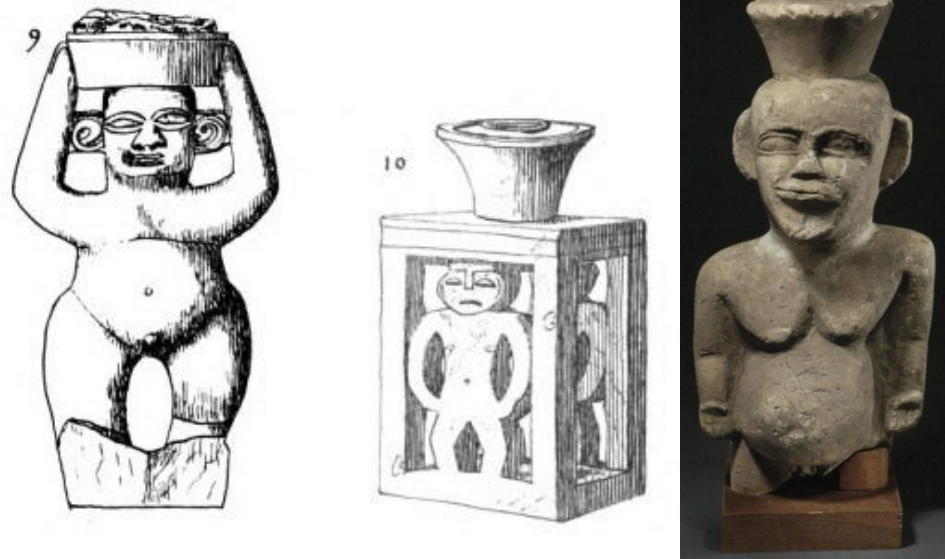


Figure 88 (left) – Female and double-male dwarf stands from Lahun. Image from Petrie, *IKG*, pl. VI.9-10.
Figure 89 (right) – Male dwarf stand from Lahun. Image from Oppenheim et al., *Ancient Egypt Transformed*, Cat. 139.

⁶⁸² Petrie, *IKG*, 11; Raven, “A puzzling pataekos,” 14.

⁶⁸³ Raven, “A puzzling pataekos,” 14-15; Dasen, *Dwarves*, 141-42.

⁶⁸⁴ For the meaning of the cobra wands, see § 2.6 above.

⁶⁸⁵ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 90; Raven, “A puzzling pataekos,” fig. 1 and pl. 1, 7ff.

⁶⁸⁶ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 142.

⁶⁸⁷ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 142.



Figure 90 (left) – Double-male dwarf stand UC16520. Image from Raven, “A puzzling pataekos,” pl. 2.

Figure 91 (right) – Unprovenanced female dwarf stand Leiden F 1984.11.3. Image from Raven, “Pataekos,” pl. 1.

The closest parallel to the Middle Kingdom stands are three ivory statuette stands found in the deposit of the Great Temple in Hierakonpolis,⁶⁸⁸ which all depict female dwarves. Two of them wear long dresses and heavy wigs over the shoulder and back.⁶⁸⁹ Similar wigs in the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom are associated with Hathor and characterized some of the Middle Kingdom fertility figurines,⁶⁹⁰ as well as some of the female dwarf figures.⁶⁹¹ A third (Figure 79) has a protruding belly, perhaps indicating pregnancy.⁶⁹² The right hand and probably the left hand was placed over the chest like the New Kingdom depictions of pregnant women.⁶⁹³ Dasen had supposed that these early stands may have been dedicated to a goddess associated with birth by women assimilated to dwarves or that female dwarves acted as helpers of birth.⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁸⁸ Adams, *Ancient Hierakonpolis*, 8ff., 113.

⁶⁸⁹ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, 108, Cat. E 106-107, pl. 27.4.

⁶⁹⁰ Type A2c. See below, § 6.2.1.2.

⁶⁹¹ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 108.

⁶⁹² Dasen, *Dwarves*, 108.

⁶⁹³ See Raven, “A puzzling pataekos,” 11; Dasen, *Dwarves*, 108.

⁶⁹⁴ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 109.

Table 12 – Middle Kingdom Dwarf Stands

Context	Date	Site	Gender	Legs	Position	Material	Object
Unprov.	MK?	unprov.	Female	standing	grasps snake in each fist	limestone	RMO E 1984/11.3 ⁶⁹⁵
Town	12/13D.	Lahun	Female	standing	supporting dish on head	limestone	loc. unknown ⁶⁹⁶
Town	12/13D.	Lahun	Male	N/A	arms hanging down	limestone	UC 16526 ⁶⁹⁷
Town	12/13D.	Lahun	Male	N/A	N/A	clay	UC 16651 ⁶⁹⁸
Town	12/13D.	Lahun	Male	N/A	supporting lamp on head	limestone	UC 16522 ⁶⁹⁹
Town	12/13D.	Lahun	Male	standing	holding belly with both hands	limestone	UC 16527 ⁷⁰⁰
Town	12/13D.	Lahun	Male	standing back-to-back	supporting cup with raised hands	limestone	UC 16520 ⁷⁰¹
Town	12/13D.	Lahun	Male	standing back-to-back	supporting cup with raised hands	clay	Manchester 280 ⁷⁰²
Town	12/13D.	Lahun	Male	standing back-to-back	supporting cup with raised hands	limestone	Manchester 279 ⁷⁰³
Town	12/13D.	Lahun	Male	standing back-to-back	supporting lamp on head	limestone	UC 16523/6 ⁷⁰⁴
Town	12/13D.	Lahun	Male	standing back-to-back	supporting lamp on head	Clay	UC 16525 ⁷⁰⁵

3.1.2 New Kingdom Dwarfs

While dwarves became rare in the private iconography of the New Kingdom, they occurred in religious contexts of the early New Kingdom.⁷⁰⁶ During this period, the dwarf-form

⁶⁹⁵ Raven, “A puzzling pataekos,” 7ff., fig. 1 and pl. 1

⁶⁹⁶ Petrie, *IKG*, 11, pl. VI, no. 9; Raven, “A puzzling pataekos,” 14; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 143, fig. 9.24.

⁶⁹⁷ Petrie, *IKG*, 11; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 139.

⁶⁹⁸ Accessed from museum online catalog 5/6/2016.

⁶⁹⁹ Petrie, *IKG*, 11; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 137.

⁷⁰⁰ Petrie, *IKG*, 11; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 140.

⁷⁰¹ Petrie, *KGH*, 26; Raven, “A puzzling pataekos,” 14, pl. 2; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 136.

⁷⁰² Petrie, *IKG*, 11, pl. VI, no. 10; David, *Pyramid Builders*, 134, pl. 10; Raven, “A puzzling pataekos,” 14; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 142.

⁷⁰³ Griffith, *Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities*, 32; David, *Pyramid Builders*, 134.

⁷⁰⁴ Petrie, *IKG*, 11; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 138, pl. 34.1.

⁷⁰⁵ Petrie, *IKG*, 26, 44.

⁷⁰⁶ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 145.

of Aha/Bes became predominant, suppressing the earlier type of the human dwarf.⁷⁰⁷ Some, like one from Amarna (Figure 92),⁷⁰⁸ represented the dwarf with a kilt. One calcite figure (Figure 93) vase excavated from the temple of Hathor at Serabit el-Khadim⁷⁰⁹ depicts a dwarf carrying a jar that probably contained unguents to anoint the cult statue,⁷¹⁰ like similar calcite vessels at the site which depicted Bes and the Hathor-cow.⁷¹¹ Another similar calcite vase may come from a similar context.⁷¹² Two holes are drilled below the abdomen, and a phallus may have been set in one of them, enhancing the fertility association.⁷¹³ One vase BM 29935 (Figure 94), carrying a pot on his left shoulder, depicts male genitals and breasts, but also the protruding belly and large hips associated with pregnancy.⁷¹⁴

The modelling similarly occurs in figure vases of pregnant women, as well as depictions of Taweret and fecundity figures.⁷¹⁵ This resemblance may reflect the relationship of dwarves with childbirth and motherhood, such as in the medical-magical spells discussed above.⁷¹⁶ Two calcite figure vases, one of which occurred in a tomb in Balabish⁷¹⁷ and the other unprovenanced,⁷¹⁸ depict female musicians holding a lute and wearing a girdle around the hips. These female dwarves retained their association with fertility and pregnancy, maintaining their

⁷⁰⁷ Bonnet, *Reallexikon*, 101-9; Altenmüller, "Bes," 720-4; Raven, "Pataekos," 10.

⁷⁰⁸ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, pl. 35.2.

⁷⁰⁹ Oxford, Ashmolean 1911.407; W.M.F. Petrie, *Researches in Sinai* (London: J. Murray, 1906), 137-8; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 203, pl. 37.1.

⁷¹⁰ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 146-147.

⁷¹¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 535-8. See also the calcite unguent-vases from the tomb of Tutankhamun, I.E.S. Edwards, *The treasures of Tutankhamun* (London: British Museum, 1972), nos. 3-4.

⁷¹² UC 15758: Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 206, pl. 37.4.

⁷¹³ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, 147. See Hornblower, "Phallic offerings to Hathor," 8-12; Ibid., "Phallic offerings to Hathor," *Man* 53 (1927): 150-3; Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 434-8, 444-9.

⁷¹⁴ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, 144.

⁷¹⁵ Brunner-Traut; Dasen, *Dwarves*, 144.

⁷¹⁶ Dasen, *Dwarves*, 144.

⁷¹⁷ Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 178, D7; Wainwright, *Balabish*, 56, pl. XX; Brunner-Traut, "Gravidenflasche," 39, no. 10; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 201, pl. 35.3.

⁷¹⁸ BM 30459: Hornemann, *Types*, 888; Brunner-Traut, "Gravidenflasche," 38-9, no.9, pl.6; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 205, pl. 37.2.

wide hips and prominent bellies.⁷¹⁹ Given that the dwarf also occurred in association with a singer of Hathor in the Erotic Turin Papyrus,⁷²⁰ the dwarf may have alluded to associations of the goddess with Bes.⁷²¹



Figure 92 (left) – NK dwarf figure from Amarna, MFA 48.296. Image from Dasen, *Dwarfs*, pl. 35.2.
Figure 93 (middle) – NK dwarf figure from Serabit el-Khadim. Image from Dasen, *Dwarfs*, pl. 37.1.
Figure 94 (right) – Unprovenanced NK dwarf figurine, BM 29935. Image from Dasen, *Dwarfs*, pl. 37.3.

Table 13 – New Kingdom Dwarf Figurines

Context	Date	Site	Clothes	Legs	Arms	Details	Material	Object
Tomb	18D.	Balabish	Belt	standing	holding lute	figure vase, female	calcite	Ithaca, Cornell University ⁷²²
Temple	18D.	Serabit el-Khadim	Naked	standing	carrying large vase on back	figure vase	calcite	Oxford AM 1911.407 ⁷²³

⁷¹⁹ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, 144.

⁷²⁰ See in § 7.4.1.

⁷²¹ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, 144.

⁷²² Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 178, D7; Wainwright, *Balabish*, 56, pl. XX; Brunner-Traut, “Gravidenflasche,” 39, no. 10; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. d 201, pl. 35.3.

⁷²³ Petrie, *Researches in Sinai*, 137-8; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. E 203, pl. 37.1.

Town	18D.	Amarna	Kilt	standing	carrying jar on left shoulder	cartouches of Akhenaten and Nefertiti	boxwood	MFA 48.296 ⁷²⁴
Town	18D.	Amarna	Kilt	standing	carrying jar on left shoulder		black stone	BM 37201 ⁷²⁵
Town	18D.	Amarna	Kilt	standing	carrying jar on left shoulder		calcite	MMA 17.190.1963 ⁷²⁶
unprov.	18D.	unprov.	Naked	standing	carrying pot on left shoulder	figure vase	calcite	BM 29935 ⁷²⁷
unprov.	18D.	unprov.	Naked	standing	holding lute	figure vase, female	calcite	BM 30459 ⁷²⁸
unprov.	18D.	unprov.	Naked	standing	carrying large amphora	figure vase	calcite	UC 15758 ⁷²⁹

3.1.3 Conclusions

Dwarf figurines and stands were mostly a Middle Kingdom phenomenon based on Predynastic to Old Kingdom precedent. Sympathetic magic, their association with Aha/Bes, and the presence of children with some of the figurines indicated their function in fertility and birth. This purpose is especially present for the Kahun dwarf stands, which appeared to have functioned as part of household shrines. These shrines likely were ancestors to the later New Kingdom domestic shrines at Amarna and Deir el-Medina.⁷³⁰ The statuettes, in contrast, tended to be limited to funerary contexts, likely due to restrictions on the use of certain religious items.

⁷²⁴ Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 168, A18; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. E 198, pl. 35.2.

⁷²⁵ Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 168, A19; Hornemann, *Types*, 338; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. E d 199.

⁷²⁶ Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 169, A20; Hornemann, *Types*, 339; Hayes, *Scepter II*, 314, 316, fig. 198; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. E d 200.

⁷²⁷ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. E 204, pl. 37.3.

⁷²⁸ Hornemann, *Types*, 888; Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 66, fig. 20; Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 205, pl. 37.2.

⁷²⁹ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, Cat. 206, pl. 37.4.

⁷³⁰ See below, § 7.5.

While dwarf figurines and stands dated mainly to the Middle Kingdom, nude female figurines lasted from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom and beyond. Both object types had similar themes of children and links to Hathor. Notably, the plaited hairstyle and large wigs of female dwarf figurines resemble certain hairstyles of Type A2 figurines. Dwarf figurines originated from funerary areas, while the stands were exclusively from Kahun. In contrast, excavators found female figurines in tomb, temple, and town areas.

3.2 Female Figurines

Most modern scholarship has considered nude female figurines to embody fertility and birth.⁷³¹ Types dated from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom and beyond, and occurred in tombs, temples, and towns. While most originated from Upper Egypt, female figurine types ranged in localization, level of standardization, and characteristic context. With more recent research on female figurines,⁷³² an updated and modified typology proven necessary. Some figurines were too fragmentary to categorize.⁷³³ Pinch did not consider certain objects, such as paddle dolls and plaque figurines, in her typology, though they functioned as types of female figures. Other figurines, particularly those from the New Kingdom, required recategorization. Current evidence still supports nude female figurines having a general fertility function, with specializations based on certain types.

3.2.1 Type A: Dancer Figurines

Type A figurines can be subdivided into two general types: wooden paddle-shaped females referred to as “paddle dolls” in the scholarly literature (Type A1), and female figurines of

⁷³¹ Except Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 124-161.

⁷³² See above, § 1.1.3.

⁷³³ Ex: Deir el-Medina [Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, pl. XLII; Backhouse, "Female figurines," 33], Dra Abu el-Nega [G. Menéndez, "Figurines and statuettes from the area of TT 11-12 in Dra Abu el-Naga," *SAK* 40 (2001): no. 2-5]; Kuban [W.B. Emery and L.P. Kirwan, *Excavations and survey between Wadi es-Sebua* (Cairo: Government Press, 1935), 52-3, fig. 33, object H5-6].

wood, stone, ivory, or faience deliberately truncated at the knees, which Pinch labelled Type 1 (Type A2). Given their similar contexts and iconography,⁷³⁴ I have categorized them under Type A. Excavators found Type A1 in tombs dating from the late 6th to 13th Dynasty, with their greatest popularity during the late 11th and early 12th Dynasty.⁷³⁵ Type A2 overlapped with A1 with the beginning of the 12th Dynasty but continued beyond the 12th Dynasty through the Second Intermediate Period.⁷³⁶

3.2.1.1 Type A1: “Paddle Dolls”

While no two Type A1 figures are identical, there are several features which characterize the form. One such attribute is the *menat*-shape of the figurines, created by the enlarged bottom, angular shoulders and the general lack of arms.⁷³⁷ The hair, consisting of strings of beads of mud and faience on surviving examples, likewise bears resemblance to the strings on the tops of *menat*-necklaces.⁷³⁸ This resemblance, in addition to other qualities, namely dress, presence of tattoos, and prominent genital exposure, are critical for interpretation and distinguish this type from regular fertility figurines.

Unlike regular fertility figurines of this period⁷³⁹ Type A1 figurines were clothed. The dresses were brightly colored, stopping just below the breasts, and had two cross straps. Type A1 figurines with cross bands commonly depicted these bands on the back as simple strings of beads (Figures 95 and 96).⁷⁴⁰ The patterns of the clothing usually were lozenges/diamonds (Figure 95),

⁷³⁴ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 199, 200, 212, notes some of the physical similarities between Type A1 “paddle dolls” and Type A2.

⁷³⁵ Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 127; H. E. Winlock, “The museum’s excavations at Thebes,” *BMMA* 27.3/2 (1932): 36.

⁷³⁶ Winlock, “The museum’s excavations at Thebes,” (1932), 36.

⁷³⁷ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 99-100; P. Barget, “L’origine et la signification du contrepoids de collier-menat,” *BIFAO* 52 (1953): 103-4.

⁷³⁸ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 100; M. Saleh and H. Sourouzian, *The Egyptian Museum, Official Catalogue* (Cairo: Egyptian Museum of Cairo, 1981), no. 81. See for example Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 100, fig. 15.

⁷³⁹ See below, § 3.2.2.

⁷⁴⁰ Tooley, “Middle Kingdom,” 309-310; Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 89.

checks (Figure 97), and zig-zags (Figure 98).⁷⁴¹ Belts were most commonly a checkerboard pattern (Figures 96 and 97), though a few had a thin beaded type (Figure 98).⁷⁴² Wide banded collars were typical of Type A1,⁷⁴³ though there is at least one example with a bracelet on the preserved arm (Figure 98). Some dresses had a triangular pattern (Figure 98). In addition, the fabric covering the abdomen were either central dots or vertical zig-zags.⁷⁴⁴



Figure 95 - MMA 31.3.38, from Asasif tomb 813. Photo courtesy of New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. Not to scale.

⁷⁴¹ H.E. Winlock, *Excavations at Deir el-Bahri 1911-1931* (New York: Macmillan, 1942), 129-130, 207, pls. 34 and 38; Hayes, *Scepter*, I, 220.

⁷⁴² Ex. of checkerboard pattern: Boston MFA 13.3604 (Sheikh Farag S.F. 12), MMA 27.3.51 (Asasif tomb 104-deaccessioned), Boston MFA 47.1693 (Naga el-Deir N 428). Ex. of beaded belt: MMA 31.3.39 (Asasif tomb 815-deaccessioned).

⁷⁴³ Examples from Asasif, MMA 31.3.38 (Tomb 813 – deaccessioned, now in Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas), MMA 15.10.90 (Tomb 828), and MMA 31.39 (tomb 815-deaccessioned).

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid. Diamond pattern examples: MMA 31.3.38 (Asasif tomb 813 -deaccessioned, now in Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas) and MMA 13.3.35a-b (Asasif tomb 816). Examples of zig-zag pattern: MMA 31.3.35 (Asasif tomb 816), Cairo JE 56274 (Asasif tomb 816), MMA 31.3.43 (Asasif tomb 818).



Figure 96 – MMA 31.3.35a-b, from Asasif tomb 816. Photo courtesy of New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. Not to scale.



Figure 97 (left) – MFA 13.3603, from Sheikh Farag S.F. 12. Photo courtesy of Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Not to scale.

Figure 98 (right) – MMA 15.10.90, from Thebes, Khokha, tomb 828. Expedition photo courtesy of New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. Not to scale.

Tattoos, primarily geometric patterns of dots and dashes, appeared on a number of the figurines. Diamond-shaped dot tattoos occurred on the shoulders, thighs, and/or buttocks of at

least three Type A1 figurines from tomb 816 at Deir el-Bahari (Figure 96)⁷⁴⁵ and on the arms of a paddle doll (JE 43088) discovered in Moller's tomb 35 in Qurneh, located less than a mile to the south.⁷⁴⁶ Lozenge-shaped tattoos occurred on at least three provenanced A1 figurines.⁷⁴⁷ No excavated A1 figurine illustrated the cross tattoo, though one purchased example said to be from Thebes depicted these marks.⁷⁴⁸

Besides such geometric designs, some figurines depicted more figural tattoo designs. One figure from Asasif tomb 818 (Figure 99) illustrated a bird on the front of each thigh and the small of the back,⁷⁴⁹ while another from Asasif tomb 815⁷⁵⁰ and Sheikh Farag tomb 12 (Boston MFA 13.3603) similarly portray a bird on the back.⁷⁵¹ Some of the motifs discovered on unprovenanced paddle dolls include a crocodile (Figure 100) (or perhaps a centipede) and a monkey.⁷⁵² The former likely related to Sobek, whereas the latter probably referenced Thoth.⁷⁵³ One of the paddle dolls found in Moller's Qurneh tomb 35 (Cairo JE 43088) (Figure 101) possessed, in addition to diamond shaped tattoo designs on her arms, tattoos of a lion, two dogs, a caprid, and a knife wielding Ipet/Taweret.⁷⁵⁴ This goddess ornamented other paddle dolls of less

⁷⁴⁵ MMA 31.3.35; 31.3.37, and JE 56274: Morris, "Paddle dolls," 79-80, n. 59; MMA tomb cards 2559-2562.

⁷⁴⁶ L. Keimer, *Remarques sur le tatouage dans l'Égypte ancienne* (Cairo: IFAO, 1948), 29.

⁷⁴⁷ Tooley, "Middle Kingdom," 308.

⁷⁴⁸ See Royal Museum of Scotland 1911.284, depicted in Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 126-27, no. 121.

⁷⁴⁹ New York MMA 31.3.43: Morris, "Paddle dolls," 82, note 69; MMA tomb card 2609. Similarly, a Type A1 figurine purchased in Akhmim represents one large bird on the front and two on the back (Keimer, *Remarques*, pl. 16).

⁷⁵⁰ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 82, note 69; MMA tomb card 2526.

⁷⁵¹ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 82.

⁷⁵² Morris, "Paddle dolls," 82; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom," 311.

⁷⁵³ For more on the symbolism of crocodiles and monkey/baboons, see below, § 6.2.8-9.

⁷⁵⁴ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 82; R. Anthes, "Die deutschen Grabungen auf der Westseite von Theben in den Jahren 1911 und 1913," *MDAIK* 12 (1943): Abb. 10.

secure or unknown provenience.⁷⁵⁵ These Ipet/Taweret tattoos may be precedent for later New Kingdom Bes tattoos.⁷⁵⁶



Figure 99 – MMA 31.3.43, from Asasif tomb 818. Photo courtesy of New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. Not to scale.

⁷⁵⁵ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 82, note 66: One doll may have come from Akhmim (Keimer, *Remarques*, pl. 16) and another from excavations at Sheikh Farag (MFA 13.5100), while entirely unprovenanced dolls bearing Ipet/Taweret include Brooklyn 1.37.100; British Museum 6459, 6464, 22627, 23071, and 23074.

⁷⁵⁶ See below, §§ 3.2.6 and 7.5.2.3

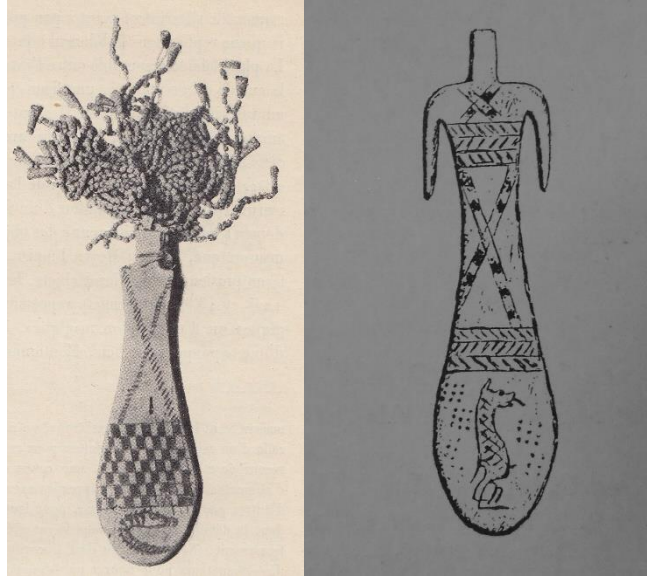


Figure 100 – Type A1 with crocodile. Image from Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, fig. 13.

Figure 101 – Type A1 figurine from Moeller Tomb 35. Image from Anthes, “Die deutschen Grabungen,” Abb. 10.

Although female figurines of all types predominantly revealed the genital region, this feature is most pronounced on Type A1. The *menat*-shape of the type served to reinforce this prominence. Some of the figures even showed the buttocks covered in the dress while exposing the genitals.⁷⁵⁷ As will be explained below, this focus on the genital region indicates the function of Type A1.

3.2.1.2 Type A2: Truncated Figurines

Several physical features are characteristic of Type A2 (Figure 102). The tattoos and patterned dresses on some resemble those from Type A1. Likewise, some Type A2 had holes for the insertion of strings of beads to represent hair, comparable to the paddle dolls. Similarly, these features distinguish the figures from the regular female figurines of the period and are crucial for interpretation of their function. Another important detail is that at least two such statuettes had

⁷⁵⁷ Ex: MMA card 2366 from Asasif Tomb 806 (Morris, “Paddle dolls,” fig. 6); London UC 59277 and 59281.

preserved writing requesting for a child.⁷⁵⁸ Perhaps there were originally more examples with such requests, but either the painted text is no longer preserved, or a written formula was not always necessary.⁷⁵⁹



Figure 102 – Type A2 figurines from Lisht and Thebes. Image from Hayes, *Scepter I*, fig. 137.

Type A2 can be subdivided into four different hairstyles as known from the archaeological record. Type A2a (Figure 102, top right) figurines featured what appears to be cropped hair with the dark areas pierced for holes.⁷⁶⁰ Type A2b (Figure 102, bottom left) are figurines with a long tripartite wig,⁷⁶¹ while the Hathoric scroll wig is characteristic of Type A2c (Figure 102, top middle).⁷⁶² The hairstyle of Type A2d (Figure 102, top left, bottom left, and bottom middle) is unusual, having a thick lock of hair falling to shoulder level or just above on

⁷⁵⁸ See below, § 5.3.

⁷⁵⁹ For possibility of non-elite access to medical/magical spells, see below, § 5.2.3.

⁷⁶⁰ Ex.: Keimer, *Remarques*, 22, pl. 14 (Cairo CG 29133); S. D'Auria et al., *Mummies and Magic: the funerary arts of ancient Egypt* (Boston: MFA, 1988), 124, no. 52.

⁷⁶¹ Ex: London UC 16725-6.

⁷⁶² Ex: H.E. Winlock, "The museum's excavations at Thebes," *BMMA* 18, December, II (1923): 20, fig. 15.

either side of the face, while the back of the head was partially shaven and the remaining hair was divided into three long, thin plaits. A few Type A2d figurines hold children (Figure 103).⁷⁶³

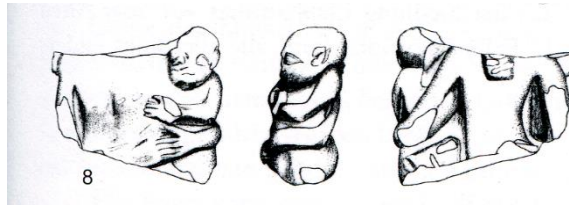


Figure 103 – Type A2d figurine from Elephantine. Image from Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," Abb. 27.8.

While just one of the hairstyles is a parallel to that of A1, the dresses on A2 are essentially the same as on A1. These patterned dresses occurred on A2 figurines as well.⁷⁶⁴ Unlike A1, some of the A2 figures appeared nude.

Type A2 figurines bore similar tattoos to those of A1, like the clothing. Diamond-shapes likewise occurred on Type A2 figurines, such as the thighs of one from Asasif tomb 518 (Cairo JE 47710),⁷⁶⁵ on figurine discovered in Asasif tomb 809 (MMA 14.1.416),⁷⁶⁶ as well as on the lower half of another faience figurine (MMA 15.10.93 –deaccessioned) from Asasif tomb 828.⁷⁶⁷ Lozenge-shaped tattoos occurred on at least seven faience A2 figures.⁷⁶⁸ Cross-shaped tattoos were more typical of Type A2, appearing in several figurines, such as one limestone figure from Asasif tomb 602⁷⁶⁹ and three from Ramesseum Tomb 5.⁷⁷⁰

⁷⁶³ Ex: Hayes, *Scepter I*, fig. 137 (lower row, 2nd from left); P. Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine. 31./32/ Grabungsbericht. XI. Zu den Kleinfunden: Weibliche Figurinen," *MDAIK* 61 (2005): Abb. 27.8.

⁷⁶⁴ Ex: Lansing and Hayes, "Excavations at Lisht," fig. 29; Keimer, *Remarques*, pl. 14.2.

⁷⁶⁵ Winlock, *Excavations*, pl. 35.

⁷⁶⁶ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 79-80, n.59: MMA tomb card 2424.

⁷⁶⁷ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 79-80, n.59: MMA tomb card 2816.

⁷⁶⁸ Tooley, "Middle Kingdom," 320.

⁷⁶⁹ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 84 (MMA 26.3.327).

⁷⁷⁰ Manchester 1788, 1789, 1794: Quibell, *Ramesseum*, pl. 3; Kemp and Merillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 166.

3.2.1.3 Context

The archaeological context of both Type A1 and A2 figurines was primarily in tomb sites and in areas particularly associated with the royal cult. Of the known provenanced examples, all of A1 occurred in tombs. Indeed, excavators found 81% of Type A1 with known provenance⁷⁷¹ occur the environs of Deir el-Bahari in Thebes. Meanwhile, Type A2 occurred primarily in Asasif, Lisht, and Lahun,⁷⁷² the latter coinciding with the rise of the royal cult in the region associated with the move of the capital to Ijettawy.⁷⁷³

Within this funerary context, Type A figurines tended to occur as sets. Asasif tombs 815 and 816 each produced ten Type A1 figurines, which the excavator deemed so similar that single artisans likely produced these sets.⁷⁷⁴ Nine of the former belonged to a single deposit, while six of the latter occurred similarly.⁷⁷⁵ Of the twenty-three Type A1 figures discovered in Moller's tomb 35 in Western Thebes,⁷⁷⁶ five of them were associated with one coffin and fifteen with another. In Asasif, some individuals possessed collections of five (tomb 828), three (tomb 839), and two (tombs 111, 126, 801, 826) Type A1 figurines each.⁷⁷⁷ A notable feature of these "troupes" is the appearance of a smaller figurine. Though excavators did not record the relationship between the Type A1 figurines and Asasif tombs 110, 806, 813, 818, and 822, their

⁷⁷¹ These figures do not include figures with tentative proveniences supplied by antiquities dealers, which have included Akhmim (Tooley, "Middle Kingdom," 312; Keimer, *Remarques*, 27-28, figs. 18-19, pl. 17. For the cult of Hathor at Akhmim and to the resident *hnr*-troupes, see) As Akhmim was home to a thriving cult of Hathor and to the only substantial grouping of priestesses of Hathor, lady of sycamore, outside Memphis [M. Galvin, "Priests and Priestesses of Hathor in the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period" (PhD diss., Brandeis University, 1981), 243; D. Nord, "The term *hnr*: 'Harem' or 'Musical Performers'?" in *Studies in Ancient Egypt, the Aegean, and the Sudan. Essays in Honor of Dows Dunham on the Occasion of his 90th Birthday, June 1, 1980* (Boston: MFA, 1981), 145.], such an attribution may be accurate (Morris, "Paddle dolls," 75, note 35).

⁷⁷² Appendix here is based on the locations recorded for paddle dolls (Morris, "Paddle dolls," 75, n.29-33) and type A2 figurines (Pinch, *Votive*, 226-227).

⁷⁷³ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 79; Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 226-7.

⁷⁷⁴ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 90-91.

⁷⁷⁵ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 90.

⁷⁷⁶ Anthes, "Die deutschen Grabungen," 4-15.

⁷⁷⁷ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 91.

iconographic resemblance strongly suggest that they belonged to sets as well.⁷⁷⁸ Similarly, groups of Type A2 figurines occurred in tombs in Lisht,⁷⁷⁹ Asasif,⁷⁸⁰ and the Ramesseum.⁷⁸¹

Likewise, certain objects tended to occur in these tombs with Type A figurines. Mirrors appear particularly associated with Type A1 figurines. Indeed, while only 8% of the tombs at Asasif held mirrors or model mirrors, eight of the ten excavated from tombs occurred with Type A1 figurines (tombs 604, 815, 816, 817, 822, 828, 839).⁷⁸² A reburial of contemporary coffins, called 6A East of Pabasa, also held both a mirror and a Type A1 figurine.⁷⁸³ Additionally, excavations in Nubia found a mirror and a Type A2 figurine in Kuban tomb 46 in cemetery 11.⁷⁸⁴ Mirrors appeared similarly associated with some New Kingdom female figurines and Wochenlaube ostraca,⁷⁸⁵ in those cases representing femininity and the bedroom. Given the association of mirrors with Hathor,⁷⁸⁶ they likely represented feminine fertility.

Other objects associated with Type A figurines are musical instruments. These were mainly ivory clappers and three harps. All three harps (real and model) occurred associated with figurines in Asasif, 6A East of Pabasa.⁷⁸⁷ The clappers were mainly in the shape of human hands and forearms. Several tombs with Type A1 figurines in Asasif,⁷⁸⁸ the Ramesseum tomb,⁷⁸⁹ and Asasif coffin reburial 6A East of Pabasa contained both clappers and figurines.⁷⁹⁰ Likewise,

⁷⁷⁸ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 91.

⁷⁷⁹ Lansing and Hayes, "Excavations at Lisht," 30, figs. 28-29.

⁷⁸⁰ Carnarvon and Carter, *Five Years' explorations*, 32, pl. 44.3.

⁷⁸¹ Quibell, *Ramesseum*, 3, pl. 3.

⁷⁸² Morris, "Paddle dolls," 97. For information on tomb 815, see Winlock, *Excavations*, 207-8.

⁷⁸³ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 94-95.

⁷⁸⁴ C.M. Firth, *Archaeological Survey of Nubia Report 1910-1911* (Cairo: Government Press, 1927), 59, pl. 27, doll 2.

⁷⁸⁵ See below, §§ 3.2.6-7, and 7.4.1.

⁷⁸⁶ See below in § 3.2.1.4.2.

⁷⁸⁷ Hayes, *Scepter I*, 248, fig. 158; L. Kinney, *Dance, Dancers and the Performance Cohort in the Old Kingdom* (Oxford, 2008), 162; Morris, "Paddle dolls," 94-5.

⁷⁸⁸ Tombs 815, 819, 839. Morris, "Paddle dolls," 94.

⁷⁸⁹ Quibell, *Ramesseum*, 3, pl. 3.

⁷⁹⁰ Kinney, *Dance*, 162; Morris, "Paddle dolls," 94-5.

clappers occurred in association with Type A2 figurines in Asasif (Tomb 518), Lisht (tombs 555, 752, 884, 885), the Ramesseum, and Kubban.⁷⁹¹ As we have seen above,⁷⁹² Aha/Bes had musical associations, with reliefs depicting Aha-masked figures holding hand-clappers and the New Kingdom dancing and musician forms. Egyptians also linked dwarfs with music.⁷⁹³ Music also appeared particularly connected to women and Hathor.⁷⁹⁴ As we will see below (Figure 254), one wand was either reworked into a clapper or an artist added apotropaic figures to a clapper, perhaps indicating that Egyptians viewed clappers functioning in a similar context as wands.

Interestingly in a tomb in Hawara, excavators found one wooden female figurine with other objects beneath a large model bed.⁷⁹⁵ Given the known connection between female figurines and bed models in the New Kingdom and beyond,⁷⁹⁶ this pair may be an early example of this association.

3.2.1.4 Interpretation

The original theories of their use described them either as “dolls,”⁷⁹⁷ “Nubian dancing girls,”⁷⁹⁸ or as “concubine figures.”⁷⁹⁹ However, the prominence of the genitals on these figurines makes the first assumption problematic. The figurines did not appear as Nubians, with the Type

⁷⁹¹ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 95; Quibell, *Ramesseum*, 3, pl. 3; Firth, *Archaeological Survey 1910-1911*, 59, pl. 27, doll 2 (Cemetery 110, Tomb 46).

⁷⁹² §2.2.1, 30-1; § 2.2.2, 34, 36, and 39.

⁷⁹³ § 3.1.1, 103; § 3.1.2, 118.

⁷⁹⁴ Women: in § 3.3; Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue II*, Cat. 2391-6, 2398-9. Hathor: see below in § 3.2.1.4.2.

⁷⁹⁵ Figurine UC 16148, bed model UC 16149: W.M.F. Petrie, *The Labyrinth, Gerzeh, and Mazghuneh* (ERA 21; London: BSAE, 1912), 36, pl. XXX; idem, *The funeral Furniture of Egypt* (BSAE 59; London: B. Quaritch, 1937), no. 211; Killen, *Ancient Egyptian Furniture I*, 30, no. 8, pl. 37.

⁷⁹⁶ See below, especially Type F figurines.

⁷⁹⁷ Winlock, *Excavations*, pl. 38; J. Garstang, *The Burial Customs of Ancient Egypt as Illustrated by Tombs of the Middle Kingdom* (London: Archibald Constable and Co. Ltd., 1907), 152.

⁷⁹⁸ Winlock, *Excavations*, 207; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 221.

⁷⁹⁹ H.E. Winlock, *The rise and fall of the Middle Kingdom in Thebes* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), 47; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 219; Saleh and Sourouzian, *The Egyptian Museum Cairo*, Cat. 81; Desroches-Noblecourt, “Concubines du Mort,” 15-43.

A2 figurines having the features and jewelry typical of Egyptians.⁸⁰⁰ Middle Kingdom court ladies wore the hairstyles of Types A2a-c, and a few Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period statuettes and stelae⁸⁰¹ and 18th Dynasty tomb paintings depicted women with hair similar to Type A2d figurines.⁸⁰² Likewise, the appearance of these figures in the tombs of men, women, and children indicate that the concubine theory is inaccurate.

As a variation of the concubine theory, Desroches-Noblecourt noted the similarity of the cross-shaped tattoos discovered on the hips of Type A2 and other nude female figurines with those on the upper bodies of partially clothed women engaged in mortuary rituals in some New Kingdom tomb paintings.⁸⁰³ These scenes depicted female relatives of the deceased engaged in a rite in which at least two of the women were explicitly identified with Isis and Nephthys, which Desroches-Noblecourt had argued indicates that these women enacted these roles to stimulate the dead man's procreative powers and thus revive him.⁸⁰⁴ However, these figurines more closely resemble those women on representations of the *hnr*-troupe who performed at funerals,⁸⁰⁵ not wearing the bag wigs of the two women.⁸⁰⁶ Indeed, some of the Type A2d statuettes carried children, which does not fit this concubine theory.⁸⁰⁷

Other scholars had suggested that Type A1 were strongly associated with Hathor, "Mistress of the Vulva" (*nbt ḥtp*) and with the protection offered by this mother goddess in

⁸⁰⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 211-212.

⁸⁰¹ Ex: H.G. Fischer, "The Mark of a Second Hand on Egyptian Antiquities," *MMJ* 9.5 (1974): 13-14, figs. 10-11; W.K. Simpson, *The Terrace of the Great God at Abydos: The Offering Chapels of Dynasties 12 and 13* (New Haven: Peabody Museum, 1974), pls. 21, 65, 76.

⁸⁰² N. de G. Davies, *The Tomb of Puyemrê at Thebes II* (New York: MMA, 1923), pl. 2.

⁸⁰³ Desroches-Noblecourt, "'Concubines du Mort,'" 27.

⁸⁰⁴ See Desroches-Noblecourt, "'Concubines du Mort,'" 15-43, and the discussions in Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 214-5 and Tooley, "Middle Kingdom," 333-4.

⁸⁰⁵ H. Altenmüller, "Zur Bedeutung der Harfnerlieder des Alten Reiches," *SAK* 6 (1978): 21-2; Nord, "The tern *xnr*," 140-2.

⁸⁰⁶ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 215.

⁸⁰⁷ Desroches-Noblecourt, "'Concubines,'" 34-42; Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 215.

matters of both birth and rebirth.⁸⁰⁸ Generally, scholars had considered both types as generic fertility figures, based on their emphasis on the genitals and the cowrie girdles they wear.⁸⁰⁹ Based on New Kingdom female figurines, Pinch had proposed that the figurines were supposed to lay on their backs.⁸¹⁰

However, recent analysis by Morris indicates that these figures served a more specialized function, namely as representations of *hnr*-dancers, cultic performers closely associated with the royal and private mortuary cults and Hathor.⁸¹¹ This linkage is based on context, both in terms of sites and associated finds, such as mirrors and musical instruments, and their physical features, such as dress, tattoos, and genital exposure.

3.2.1.4.1 Appearance

The core of the theory that Type A figurines represented *hnr*-women are the parallels between the iconography of the figures and that of the various representations, primarily in reliefs, of the *hnr* troupes. These depictions,⁸¹² primarily from private tomb chapels, ranged in date from the Old Kingdom through the New Kingdom, though they remained relatively consistent. Thus, they, along with the remains of suspected *hnr*-women, provide a firm basis to compare with the figurines.

⁸⁰⁸ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 217.

⁸⁰⁹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 217; P. Bienkowski and A. Tooley, *Gifts of the Nile* (London: H.M.S.O., 1995), 49; Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 127; Watterson, *Women in ancient Egypt*, 100; Barguet, "L'origine de la dignification," 103.

⁸¹⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 214.

⁸¹¹ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 71-103.

⁸¹² See H. Wild, "Les danses sacrées de l'Égypte ancienne," in *Les Danses Sacrées: Egypt Ancienne-Israël-Islam-Asie Centrale-Indie-Cambodge-Bali-Java-Chine-Japon* (Sources Orientales 6; Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1963), 69-72; E. Brunner-Traut, *Der Tanz im Alten Ägypten nach bildlichen und inschriftlichen Zeugnissen*, 3rd ed. (Ägyptologische Forschungen 6. Glückstadt: Augustin, 1992), 22-24, 39-43, 48-52.

One of the most notable features of Type A1 is its resemblance to the shape of a *menat*-necklace. Representations of *hnr*-women frequently showed some of these performers holding *menat*-necklaces.⁸¹³ Hathor herself bore the epithet "Lady of the *Menat*,"⁸¹⁴ and, as a fetish of the goddess, ancient Egyptians thought the *menat* could bring those who handled it in direct contact with the divine and impart to them the blessings of the goddess.⁸¹⁵ Hathor's priestesses also served as potential vessels of the goddess, capable of employing her and channeling her power. Thus, the term *menat* could also reference the *hnr* themselves.⁸¹⁶ While some scholars, noticing the resemblance of the locks of hair on Type A1 figurines to the strings of beads of *menat*-necklaces,⁸¹⁷ thought the former could be similarly shaken,⁸¹⁸ Morris had noted that the mud and faience beads would likely be too fragile for such use.⁸¹⁹ In what may appear to be a metaphor of the base of the *menat* representing a womb, more elaborate Type A1 figurines depicted birth-related themes, such as Ipet/Taweret and the birthing of Horus in the marshes.⁸²⁰ As we will discuss below, some New Kingdom figurines hold *menat*-necklaces.⁸²¹

Another parallel occurred with the dresses. While brightly colored clothing appeared on representations of female offering bearers and statues of the wives and daughters of high officials of the Middle Kingdom,⁸²² the clothing represented on Type A figurines most closely parallels that of *hnr*-women. The patterns of the dresses, with lozenges, checks, and zig-zags, also appeared similar to the clothing associated with Nubians of the period, as well as the tattoos on

⁸¹³ Ex: Vandier, *Manuel IV*, 442, pl. XXI (figs. 237 and 244).

⁸¹⁴ Barguet, "L'origine de la dignification," 106.

⁸¹⁵ A. Blackman, *The Rock Tombs of Meir I* (ASE 22; London: EEF, 1914), 22, 25; Kinney, *Dance*, 37.

⁸¹⁶ Kinney, *Dance*, 39-40; Morris, "Paddle dolls," 99.

⁸¹⁷ See for example Morris, "Paddle dolls," 100, fig. 15.

⁸¹⁸ Saleh and Sourouzian, *Official Catalogue*, no. 81.

⁸¹⁹ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 100.

⁸²⁰ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 100; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom," 309; Barguet, "L'origine de la dignification," 103-111.

⁸²¹ § 3.2.3.

⁸²² E. Riefstahl, *Pattern Textiles in pharaonic Egypt* (New York: Brooklyn Museum, 1943), 12, fig. 11; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 330, fig. 218; D'Auria et al., *Mummies and Magic*, 78-79.

bodies of ‘Ajayet and Kemsit by the mortuary Temple of Mentuhotep II.⁸²³ This Nubian influence perhaps originated in the First Intermediate Period, with the spread of Nubians into Upper Egypt and Thebes during the period.⁸²⁴ Interestingly, the wife of a priest of Hathor wore a similar dress in a tomb scene at Meir.⁸²⁵ Sometimes referred to as “Libyan bands” in the scholarly literature, the cross-bands occurred in Old Kingdom reliefs representing *hnr*-women and acrobatic dancers.⁸²⁶

Though dating to the reign of Amenhotep II, the tomb of Kenamun (TT 93)⁸²⁷ provides a depiction of *hnr*-women (Figure 104) that closely resembles that of the Type A figurines, suggesting either conscious archaizing or a continuing tradition.⁸²⁸ In a scene celebrating the dragging of several statues, a procession included priests and “all his female relations, combined into a chorus of women.” While two labelled *hnr*-troupes, that of Hathor and another goddess, wore long white dresses, another *hnr*-troupe of Hathor more closely resembled the Type A figurines. The scene depicted two of these latter women, who snap their fingers and slap their thighs, in tight diamond-patterned skirts with cross braces. Behind them, two other women, who dance, most closely resemble the Type A1 figurines, namely the beaded and checkerboard belts, wide banded collars, and the two cross-over bands.⁸²⁹ In addition, the fabric covering the

⁸²³ Riefstahl, *Patterned Textiles*, 11-12; Winlock, *Excavations at Deir el-Bahri*, 129-130, 207, pls. 34 and 38; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 220.

⁸²⁴ For spread of Nubians, see for ex. W. Ejsmond, "The Nubian Mercenaries of Gebelein during the First Intermediate Period in Light of Recent Field Research," *JAEl* 14 (2017): 11-13.

⁸²⁵ A. Blackman, *The Rock Tombs of Meir IV* (ASE 25; London: EEF, 1917), 331, fig. 219.

⁸²⁶ Nord, "The term *hnr*," 137. Ex: Vandier, *Manuel IV*, figs. 194 (pl. XVI), 226; Brunner-Traut, *Tanz*, 28 (Abb. 10), 29 (Abb. 11); Kinney, *Dance*, 59, fig. 1.23; 60, fig. 1.30; 62, fig. 1.35.

⁸²⁷ Wild, "Danses sacrées," 70-1; Brunner-Traut, *Tanz*, 48.

⁸²⁸ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 87.

⁸²⁹ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 89.

abdomen, consisting of diamonds with central dots for the first dancer and vertical zig-zags for the second, bear strong parallels to designs on Type A1 figurines.⁸³⁰



Figure 104 – Dancers from tomb of Kenamun. Image from Davies, *Ken-Amun*, pl. XLI.

In addition to clothing, similarities between Type A and *hnr*-women also occur in the tattoos represented on their bodies. Three women from the northern triangular side courtyard cemetery,⁸³¹ who are suspected of being *hnr*-women, had tattoos reminiscent of those on the Type A figurines.⁸³² The mummy of Amunet has patterns of dots and dashes as well as an elliptical design on the lower abdomen (Figure 105). Two other women in Deir el-Bahari, in graves 23 (Figure 106) and 26, have dotted diamond patterns on their upper arms and chest. A

⁸³⁰ Ibid. Diamond pattern examples: MMA 31.3.38 (Asasif tomb 813 -deaccessioned, now in Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas) and MMA 13.3.35a-b (Asasif tomb 816). Examples of zig-zag pattern: MMA 31.3.35 (Asasif tomb 816), Cairo JE 56274 (Asasif tomb 816), MMA 31.3.43 (Asasif tomb 818).

⁸³¹ Keimer, *Remarques*, 8-15, pls. 1-9; Winlock, *Rise and Fall*, 74.

⁸³² Morris, "Paddle dolls," 79-81; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom," 308.

similar tattoo occurs on the thigh of a *hnr*-dancer from a Deir el-Medina ostraca.⁸³³ Bird tattoos seem to have been particularly linked to cultic performers associated with the royal mortuary cult.⁸³⁴ One woman from tomb 1008, excavated in the platform of the aborted complex next to Mentuhotep IV's to the south,⁸³⁵ has a tattoo consisting of two birds on her right shoulder elbow quite similar to those discovered on Type A1 figurines from Asasif tomb 818.⁸³⁶ While the excavators dated the tomb to the Second Intermediate Period and early 18th Dynasty, it likely dates to the late 11th to early 12th Dynasties based on the temple platform, which dates either to Sankhare or Amenemhet I,⁸³⁷ and some of the artifact assemblage.⁸³⁸

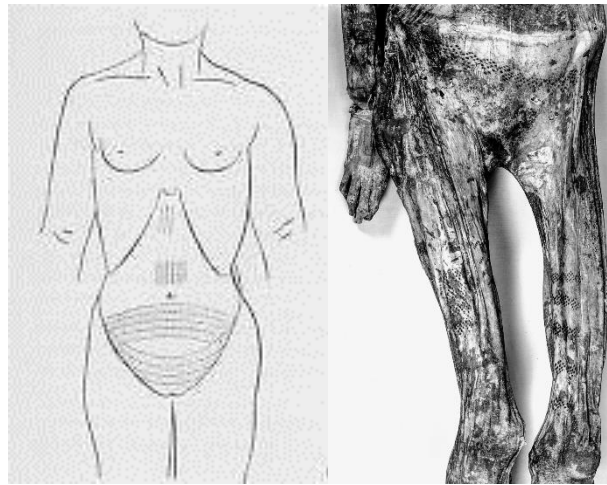


Figure 105 (left) – Amunet's tattoos. Image from Keimer, *Remarques*, fig. 6.

Figure 106 (right) – Tattoos of woman from Deir el-Bahari, pit 23. Image from Roehrig, "Two Tattooed Women," fig. 4b.

Such tattoos also occurred in representations of women in ritual, most notably the *hnr*.⁸³⁹

The better preserved of two dancers on the wall of 12th Dynasty tomb of Wah-ka II at Qau clearly

⁸³³ Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue II*, Cat. 2868.

⁸³⁴ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 82.

⁸³⁵ Do. Arnold, "Amenemhat I and the Early Twelfth Dynasty at Thebes," *MMJ* 26 (1991): 14, 18.

⁸³⁶ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 82.

⁸³⁷ Arnold, "Amenemhat I," 14, 18, dates the structure to the reign of Amenemhat I prior to his move to Ijettawy.

⁸³⁸ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 82-83, n. 71.

⁸³⁹ Altenmüller 1978, 21-2; Nord 1981, 140-2.

wore diamond tattoos on her hips (Figure 107).⁸⁴⁰ Desroches-Noblecourt had noted the similarity of the cross-shaped tattoos discovered on the hips of Type A2 and other nude female figurines with those on the upper bodies of partially clothed women engaged in mortuary rituals in some New Kingdom tomb paintings.⁸⁴¹ Given the weaknesses of the concubine theory, it is more accurate to ascribe a restorative function based on association with the goddess Hathor, rather than a purely sexual role for a male deceased.



Figure 107 – Scene of *hnr*-dancers from tomb of Wah-ka II. Image from Vandier, *Manuel IV*, fig. 232.

Contemporary C-Group mortuary contexts also unearthed further parallels for the tattoos on the figurines.⁸⁴² Human remains from both Kuban and Hierakonpolis have tattoos similar to

⁸⁴⁰ W.M.F. Petrie, *Antaeopolis: The tombs of Qau* (ERA 51; London: BSAE, 1930), pl. 24; Brunner-Traut, *Tanz*, 39. A triangular tattoo made up of dots is seen on a similar acrobatic dancer from the New Kingdom, discovered on an ostraca at Deir el-Medina (K.W. Poon and T.I. Quickenden, “A review of tattooing in ancient Egypt,” *BACE* 17 (2006): 126-7, fig. 4).

⁸⁴¹ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 83.

⁸⁴² Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 80.

those on the mummies from Deir el-Bahari.⁸⁴³ The 1910 excavations of C-Group graves at Kuban brought to light fragments of a naturally preserved tattooed Nubian woman (Figure 108 [left]), who was contemporary of Amunet and her peers.⁸⁴⁴ The tattoos on this Nubian woman correspond closely to those found on Amunet and the other two mummies, namely dots and dashes formed into geometric patterns.⁸⁴⁵ Similar dots and dashes occurred with the tattoos preserved on the left breast, along left front pelvis, right forearm and on left hand of Nubian woman 30-50 years old excavated from Hierakonpolis.⁸⁴⁶ Nubian fertility figurines likewise produced examples of tattoos. One notable example comes from Toshka (Figure 109), a figurine with the similar truncated arms and pointed neck of Type A1 figurines.⁸⁴⁷ This figure shares the diamond-shaped dotted designs on the abdomen, resembling a girdle, as the women in tombs 23 and 26 at Deir el-Bahari.⁸⁴⁸ Another figurine, from Kubban Cemetery 110, tomb 46 (Figure 108 [right]),⁸⁴⁹ depicted cross tattoos around her waist. All known Nubian mummies with tattoos are female, suggesting that this practice was gender specific.⁸⁵⁰ Scholars have noted the visibility of Nubian styles in the court of Mentuhotep IV elsewhere, and Morris had suggested that Nubian dancers may have served to re-enact Hathor's return from Nubia and subsequent pacification.⁸⁵¹

⁸⁴³ Poon and Quickenden, "Tattooing," 127-8.

⁸⁴⁴ Bianchi, *Daily Life of the Nubians*, 64; Ibid., "Tattoo in Ancient Egypt," in *Marks of Civilization: Artistic Transformations of the Human Body*, ed. A. Rubin (Los Angeles, 1988), 23.

⁸⁴⁵ Bianchi, *Daily Life of the Nubians*, 64; Poon and Quickenden, "Tattooing," 127.

⁸⁴⁶ Poon and Quickenden, "Tattooing," 128.

⁸⁴⁷ H. Junker, *Toschke, Bericht über die Grabungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien auf dem Friedhof von Toschke (Nubien) im Winter 1911/12* (DAWW 68/1 (Vienna: Hölder Pichler-Tempsky A.-G., 1926), 75, pl. 11/55, 24/413. The figurine is Kunsthistorische Museum no. 7326. See also Keimer, *Remarques*, 37-38, fig. 32.

⁸⁴⁸ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 80; MMA tomb card 100.

⁸⁴⁹ Firth, *The Archaeological Survey of Nubia 1910-1911*, 59, pl. 27, doll 2.

⁸⁵⁰ Bianchi, *Daily Life of the Nubians*, 64.

⁸⁵¹ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 80-81.

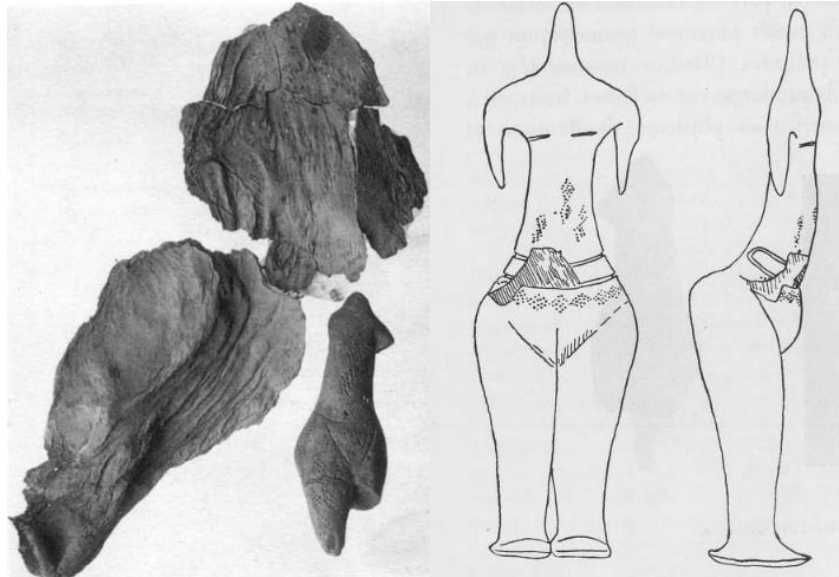


Figure 108 (left) – Tattooed skin and figurine from Kuban. Image from Firth, *Archaeological Survey of Nubia*, pl. 25d.

Figure 109 (right) – Female figurine from Toshka. Image from Keimer, *Remarques*, fig. 32.

In addition to the geometric and bird tattoos, the more figural representations found on some Type A1 figurines, especially those of Ipet/Taweret, are also significant. This guardian hippopotamus deity appeared on numerous magical knives, at least one of which was found in the same tomb as a Type A1 figurine.⁸⁵² Geraldine Pinch had suggested that the Ipet/Taweret tattoo may have been thought to safeguard the health of a fetus, given that in the celestial realm the hippopotamus goddess protected the infant sun-god.⁸⁵³

Among the iconographic elements such as dress and tattoos, the emphasis of the genital region on the figurines indicates that their primary function resides in this zone. This prominence may have represented *hnr*-women engaging in backbends or high kicks, both of which may have solar significance, since the result of both poses is the reveal of the genitalia upward towards the

⁸⁵² Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 82; Quibell, *Ramesseum*, pl. 3.2. A magic knife with Ipet/Taweret on it (MMA 22.1.153) was also discovered in Lisht tomb 885 together with a truncated female figurine (MMA 22.1.180).

⁸⁵³ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 217.

sun.⁸⁵⁴ The former occurred in contemporary models (Figure 110)⁸⁵⁵ and numerous two-dimensional representations.⁸⁵⁶ The scene from the tomb of Wah-ka II at Qau,⁸⁵⁷ for example, shows both dancers bent backwards in mid-flip, feet arched over the head. This act of skirt raising was likely an intentional cultic act, symbolizing the “union of Hathor and Re” at royal temples, Hathor temples, and solar temples.⁸⁵⁸ Interestingly, the scene of dancers, some of whom perform the high kick dance, from the tomb of Watetkhethor in the Old Kingdom includes the caption, “Behold! The secret of the *hnr*-women” (*mk sšt3 hnr(w)t*).⁸⁵⁹ While its implications with birth will be discussed below,⁸⁶⁰ this reference to a secret may also more literally referred to the genital reveal. This high kick would have further heightened the intimate interweaving of the identities of the dancers with that of Hathor, the Mistress of the Vulva (*nbt ḥtp*).⁸⁶¹ This prominence of the genitals also occurred with contemporary figurines as well as handmade New Kingdom figures.⁸⁶²

⁸⁵⁴ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 85.

⁸⁵⁵ See, for example, Brooklyn Museum 13.1024, which was discovered in tomb D303 at Abydos and dates the Middle Kingdom or the very similar limestone statuette Berlin Museum 14202. These are published in J.H. Breasted, *Egyptian Servant Statues* (New York, 1948), 89-90, pls. 84 and 85a, respectively. See also Peet, *Cemeteries of Abydos III*, 27, pl. 9.2.

⁸⁵⁶ Ex: Vandier, *Manuel IV*, figs. 226, 231, 232, 239-243, 244 (pl. XXI), 253; Brunner-Traut, *Tanz*, 48-52, Abb. 22-24.

⁸⁵⁷ Petrie, *Anateopolis*, pl. 24.

⁸⁵⁸ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 86; Galvin, “Priests,” 100-1; R.A. Gillam, “Priestesses of Hathor: Their Function, Decline and Disappearance,” *JARCE* 32 (1995): 216, 221.

⁸⁵⁹ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 85; Kinney, *Dance*, 159.

⁸⁶⁰ See § 3.2.1.5.

⁸⁶¹ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 85-6; Roth, “The *psš-kf*,” 141-3. For the identification of Hathor with Nebet-Hetepet in the Middle Kingdom, see Kinney, *Dance*, 166. For the concept of embodiment, see the discussions in Galvin, “Priests,” 215-8, and Kinney, *Dance*, 37-40, 167.

⁸⁶² §§ 3.2.2, 7-8; §3.4.



Figure 110 – Figurine of *hnr*-dancer. Image from Peet, *Cemeteries of Abydos III*, pl. 9.2.

These genital-revealing dances most often honored Hathor.⁸⁶³ For example, a song captioning a scene of dancers in Kagemni's tomb (Figure 111), the earliest and most energetic high-kick dance, stated: "Hathor (appears) at the portal of the East. 'Greetings to her' say the gods. 'Greetings to you' says Re. 'My image is united.'"⁸⁶⁴ Temple texts reveal that at the most climactic moment of the rite – through an act of unveiling – Hathor "unites (her) rays with (those) of her father in the horizon."⁸⁶⁵ Similarly, Mentuhotep II's chancellor, Khety, included a hymn in his tomb at Asasif that simultaneously celebrated the love of Hathor and Re and emphasized its importance to the revivification of the king.⁸⁶⁶ The text stated, "The Golden One has appeared at the prow of the (sun) bark, Re loves her! (Power of) powers in the Day Bark, Re loves her! Your might has reached the Aegean isles, Re loves her! Re has come forth that he may see your beauty, Re loves her! Let (King) Mentuhotep be protected, by Hathor, by Hathor!"⁸⁶⁷

⁸⁶³ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 85.

⁸⁶⁴ Brunner-Traut, *Tanz*, 24; Kinney, *Dance*, 157.

⁸⁶⁵ Bleeker, *Hathor*, 89.

⁸⁶⁶ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 85.

⁸⁶⁷ K.A. Kitchen, *Poetry of Ancient Egypt* (Jonsered: Åström, 1999), 115. Morris, "Paddle dolls," 85.



Figure 111 – Dancers from tomb of Kagemni. Image from Vandier, *Manuel IV*, fig. 205.

These songs likely referenced the similar genital reveal of Hathor in The Contendings of Horus and Seth.⁸⁶⁸ At one point in this tale, the goddess Hathor performed the vital service of reviving the sun god, who was at that point lying dormant on his back, closed in a tent and unable to perform his functions. She accomplished this feat by revealing her genitals to her father, occasioning a laugh, which revived the god, such that he was able to rise, re-enter the divine community, and resume his essential role of cosmic judge. As discussed extensively elsewhere,⁸⁶⁹ this episode seems to have provided the origin story for why cultic performers and other women ritually revealed themselves in honor of the goddess.

A similar theme occurred in a painted relief from Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari, depicting two young princesses completely nude except for their jewelry. Like Type A figurines and depictions of *hnr*, the more prominent princess, Nefrure, carried a *menat* necklace and wore a girdle, broad collar, cross-over bands, armlets, bracelets, and anklets.⁸⁷⁰

Given this connection to the *hnr*, Pinch's theory that Type A would lie on their backs is likely inaccurate. She had objected to these figures serving as dancers based on the lack of

⁸⁶⁸ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 85.

⁸⁶⁹ E.R. Morris, "Sacred and Obscene Laughter in The Contendings of Horus and Seth, in Egyptian Inversions of Everyday Life and in the Context of Cultic Competition," in *Egyptian Stories: A British Egyptological Tribute to Alan b. Lloyd*, ed. T. Schneider and K. Szpakowska (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2007), 197-224.

⁸⁷⁰ D.C. Patch, "Girdles," in *Hatshepsut: From Queen to Pharaoh*, ed. C.H. Roehrig (New York: MMA, 2005), 202, fig. 79.

representation of the feet.⁸⁷¹ The focus of the backbends and high kicks was the exposure of the genital region towards the sun, so depiction of the feet and arms would likely have been unnecessary. Indeed, Pinch had admitted to the close resemblance between the figurines and the *hnr*-dancers.⁸⁷² Likewise, there is no evidence of ritual immobilization of votive objects.⁸⁷³ Indeed, the faience animals from the same contexts are never mutilated.⁸⁷⁴

3.2.1.4.2 Significance of Context

In addition to the notable physical similarities between Type A figurines and representations of *hnr*-women, the contexts in which the figures occurred are also suggestive. The spread of Type A, compared with Type B, is rather concentrated. Within the tombs, these figures tend to occur in sets. Furthermore, mirrors and musical instruments, which are associated with the *hnrt* in reliefs dating from the Old Kingdom through the New Kingdom, tended to occur in the same tombs as the figurines. The contextual information thus supports the inferences based on the appearance of Type A.

As discussed above,⁸⁷⁵ Type A figurines tended to occur in locations associated with royal mortuary cults. We know of *hnr*-troupes who performed regularly in the mortuary temples of Abusir and Lahun in the Old and Middle Kingdoms respectively.⁸⁷⁶ This concentration is consistent with the function of the *hnr*,⁸⁷⁷ and lends additional support for the theory that Type A represented these performers. Given this observation, it is significant that the tombs on and

⁸⁷¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 213.

⁸⁷² Ibid.

⁸⁷³ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, § 3.2.2.

⁸⁷⁴ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 214.

⁸⁷⁵ See § 3.2.1.3.

⁸⁷⁶ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 79; B. Bryan, "The Etymology of *hnr* 'Group of musical performers,'" *BES* 4 (1982), 38, n. 21; W. Ward, *Essays on Feminine Titles of the Middle Kingdom and Related Subjects* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1986), 77.

⁸⁷⁷ See below, § 3.2.1.5.

adjacent to Mentuhotep II's temple platform is the only area of the main Middle Kingdom cemetery in which female figurines were not found. As evidence indicates, the women in these tombs may have been *hnr*-women and, thus, not requiring the figures of themselves.⁸⁷⁸

The high percentage of Type A, particularly Type A1, occurring in Thebes may be additionally significant. Worship of Hathor expanded into this region during the late Old Kingdom, when cults of Hathor were either newly established or much augmented in the provinces.⁸⁷⁹ Indeed, one of the earliest paddle dolls occurred in the tomb of Unis-ankh (TT 413),⁸⁸⁰ near the tombs of two 6th Dynasty priestesses of Hathor.⁸⁸¹ The mortuary temple of Mentuhotep IV, both in terms of its building features and the burials of women associated with the cult of Hathor, indicates a prominent cult of Hathor in the region. The sycamores that fronted Nebhepetre's temple at Deir el-Bahari were no doubt planted to honor the goddess, as well as the alignment with the temple of Amun at Karnak.⁸⁸² Many of the king's statues wear *Sed*-robes, indicating that the king may also have intended to celebrate *Sed*-festivals at Deir el-Bahari, which is consistent with Hathor's role during such rites.⁸⁸³ Among the first archaeologically recoverable features of the complex were the king's original dromos tomb and six statue-shrines associated subterranean crypts,⁸⁸⁴ each dedicated to a wife who also held the title of priestess of Hathor (*hmt-ntr hwt-hr*) and sole royal ornament (*hkrt nsw wꜣtt*).⁸⁸⁵

⁸⁷⁸ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 83.

⁸⁷⁹ Bleeker, *Hathor and Thoth*, 42-43; Gillam, "Priestesses," 226-31.

⁸⁸⁰ M. Saleh, "The Tomb of *Wnsj-nḥ* at Qurna (PM-No. 413)," *MDAIK* 26 (1970): 206, pl. 77.

⁸⁸¹ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 76. The tombs are published together in Saleh, *Three Old Kingdom*.

⁸⁸² Morris, "Paddle dolls," 77; Winlock, *Excavations*, 49-51.

⁸⁸³ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 77; E.F. Wente, "Hathor at the Jubilee," in *Studies in honor of J.A. Wilson*, ed. E.B. Hauser (SAOC 35; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 83-91.

⁸⁸⁴ Di. Arnold, *Der Tempel des Königs Mentuhotep von Deir el-Bahari I* (Mainz, 1974), 64: numbers 7, 9, 10, 11, 17, and 18.

⁸⁸⁵ Morris, "Paddle dolls," note 46: These title were attested for all of the women except for Myt, buried in tomb 5. Given the uniformity of the shrine-burial arrangements, however, there is a good possibility that Myt had been dedicated to the goddess and to the king even before reaching the age at which taking on full

The five women buried in the north triangular side courtyard of the temple precinct, given their richly equipped graves in comparison to the men of the cemetery, appear to have served alongside the six-priestess-wives.⁸⁸⁶ Tomb 25, the likely burial of Amunet, “Sole Royal Ornament, Priestess of Hathor,”⁸⁸⁷ contained linens with the names of various other “Royal Ornaments” of Mentuhotep II, which seems to identify the other women of the cemetery.⁸⁸⁸ According to Lana Troy, the title “sole royal ornament” bore a frequent relationship to the cult of Hathor in other contexts as well, and Egyptians sometimes used a mirror as the determinative for the word “ornament.”⁸⁸⁹ It seems likely that there was connection between the appearance of Type A figurines, the rise of the cult of Hathor in Deir el-Bahari, and the peak in popularity of the title *hkr̥t nsw wꜥtt* in 11th Dynasty Thebes.⁸⁹⁰

Given the location of Type A, it is further significant that excavators tended to find these figures in groups. These groups may have represented troupes of performers. In numerous two dimensional depictions of dancing troupes, one or two little girls performed along with adult women (Figure 112).⁸⁹¹ Such girls were quite likely the “trainees” (*nfrwt*) of the *hnr* referenced in Old Kingdom titles.⁸⁹² The conception of these larger groupings of paddle dolls as troupes stems from the similarity of their composition to that of many known cadres of musical

cultic responsibilities and consummating a marriage would be appropriate. She may perhaps have been a daughter of Nebhepetre, destined to be a priestess of Hathor by virtue of her royal birth. See Naville, *The XIth Dynasty Temple at Deir el-Bahari* II, 6-9; also Winlock, *Excavations*, 36-46; L.K. Sabbahy, “The titulary of the harem of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep, Once Again,” *JARCE* 34 (1997): 163-66.

⁸⁸⁶ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 78.

⁸⁸⁷ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 78; The other possibilities for Amunet’s burial are tombs 4 and 5 in the temple proper, however, given the fact that the burial in 5 belonged to a female who as “quite young” and that two other tattooed women were found in the triangular court, tomb 25 is perhaps the most likely possibility (Winlock, *Rise and Fall*, 43).

⁸⁸⁸ Ward, *Essays*, 108.

⁸⁸⁹ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 78; Troy, *Patterns*, 73, 78; H.G. Fischer, *Dendera in the third millennium B.C. down to the Theban domination of upper Egypt* (Locust Valley, N.Y.: Augustin, 1968), 136, n. 591; C. Lilyquist, *Ancient Egyptian mirrors: From the Earliest Times through the Middle Kingdom* (München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1979), 98.

⁸⁹⁰ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 78-9; Tooley, “Middle Kingdom,” 324.

⁸⁹¹ Ex: Vandier, *Manuel IV*, figs. 194 (pl. XVI), 203 (pl. XVI), 230 (p. 433), 237 (pl. XXI), 247 (p. 462).

⁸⁹² Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 91; Kinney, *Dance*, 29, 34-5.

performers.⁸⁹³ Indeed, three of the above discussed sets of Type A1 figurines included among their number one unpainted figure that was notably smaller than the others, which likely depicted a young girl.⁸⁹⁴ Likewise, the Lisht tomb of Hepy, a young girl, included three similar Type A2a figurines in diamond-patterned dresses along with a slightly smaller nude Type A2c figurine with diamond-shaped tattoos.⁸⁹⁵ Like Hepy, this figurine wore a girdle, long necklace, and bracelets, and the richness of the girl's tomb suggests that this figure may have represented her.⁸⁹⁶



Figure 112 – Scene of dancers from tomb of Djoserkare, Scene b. Image from Vandier, *Manuel IV*, fig. 194.

Four burials of young girls indicate that they may have served in the *hnrt* as trainees.⁸⁹⁷ Indeed, Hepy had her own burial chamber and a cowrie-imitation girdle like some of the women buried in Mentuhotep II's mortuary temple discussed above,⁸⁹⁸ features that are highly unusual given her tender age and sex. In Deir el-Bahari, Myt had the same shrine with subterranean

⁸⁹³ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 91.

⁸⁹⁴ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 91, citing Asasif tombs 815, 186, and 828.

⁸⁹⁵ Lansing and Hayes, "Excavations at Lisht," 30, figs. 28-29.

⁸⁹⁶ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 93.

⁸⁹⁷ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 92-93.

⁸⁹⁸ Lansing and Hayes, "Excavations at Lisht," 28-40.

burial as the wives who held the titles priestess of Hathor (*hmt-ntr hwt-hr*) and sole royal ornament (*hkrt nsw wꜣtt*), despite being between 3 and 5 years old at death,⁸⁹⁹ while another young girl was buried in the temple precinct in a tomb just as rich as the adult women.⁹⁰⁰ At Hawara, a Type A2 figurine occurred among the grave goods of a young girl at Hawara, Sitrenenutetet, in tomb 58.⁹⁰¹ Morris had suggested that this figurine, in parallel to that of Hepy, may have represented the owner.⁹⁰²

Certain tombs in which the figurines occur also held mirrors. Lilyquist had demonstrated through the names and titles inscribed on some mirrors, that these items were characteristic of priestesses of Hathor.⁹⁰³ In Deir el-Bahari, the tombs of “sole royal ornaments” Amunet and Ashait possessed mirrors.⁹⁰⁴ As discussed above, the word “ornament” (*hkrt*) sometimes used the mirror as a determinative. Likewise, princesses Sithathor Iunet and Mereret also possessed mirrors in their tombs.⁹⁰⁵ In a scene from the tomb of Amenemhat at Beni Hasan, harpists performed as *hnr*-musicians, while other women brought clappers, mirrors, and *menat*-necklaces to place in the grave.⁹⁰⁶

The mirrors, as well as clappers, appeared in a couple of Old Kingdom tomb scenes, those of Unis-ankh⁹⁰⁷ and Mereruka (Figure 113),⁹⁰⁸ associated with a *hnr*-dance referred to in the

⁸⁹⁹ Naville, *XIth Dynasty Temple II*, 6-9; Winlock, *Excavations*, 36-46.

⁹⁰⁰ Information on these tombs in Winlock, *Rise and Fall*, 42-444; Naville, *XIth Dynasty Temple I*, 43-47, 51.

⁹⁰¹ Petrie, *Labyrinth*, 36, pl. XXX.

⁹⁰² Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 93.

⁹⁰³ Lilyquist, *Mirrors*.

⁹⁰⁴ For Amunet's mirror, see Winlock, *Treasure*, 62. For Ashait's mirror, see MMA tomb card 43 (Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 97).

⁹⁰⁵ Winlock, *Treasure*, 60-2, pls. 14-15.

⁹⁰⁶ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 96, fig. 11; Lilyquist, *Mirrors*, fig. 131; Newberry and Griffith, *Beni Hasan I*, 31, pl. 7.

⁹⁰⁷ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 99, fig. 14; Saleh, *Three Old Kingdom*, pl. 3.

⁹⁰⁸ Wild, “Danses sacrées,” 71; Brunner-Traut, *Tanz*, 22-23; Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 98, fig. 13; Lilyquist, *Mirrors*, fig. 106; Vandier, *Manuel IV*, pl. XIX (fig. 215).

scholarly literature as the mirror dance. The scenes depicted nude female dancers, often young women, with some holding a mirror to reflect a hand-shaped clapper or their own hand.⁹⁰⁹ This dance likely held solar symbolism, with the mirror reflecting the sun and the hand representing Hathor as the “hand” of Atum in a reenactment to the union of Re and Hathor.⁹¹⁰ Mirrors and clappers found together, potentially as kits,⁹¹¹ occurred in Asasif tomb 815, tomb 839, and 6A East of Pabasa, as well as in Kuban tomb 46 from cemetery 110. The lack of depictions of the mirror dance, and the almost complete lack of finds of mirrors, clappers, and Type A2 figurines in the same tombs after the early Middle Kingdom suggests either that the dance became less popular or more restricted to royal women.⁹¹² As explained below, excavators found mirrors usually in association with clappers, which in turn are correlated with Type A, linking the imagery from the Old Kingdom scenes to the contexts of the figurines.



Figure 113 – Mirror dance from the tomb of Mereruka. Image from Vandier, *Manuel IV*, fig. 215.

Clappers and harps tended to occur in tombs which also produced Type A figurines.


Both these instruments made music to accompany the dances associated with the *hnr* and tended

⁹⁰⁹ Lilyquist, *Mirrors*, 97.

⁹¹⁰ H. Hickman, “Le danse aux miroirs: Essai du reconstitution d’une danse pharaonique de l’ancien empire,” *BIÉ* 37 (1956): 151-90; Bianchi, *Daily Life of the Nubians*, 65; Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 98.

⁹¹¹ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 98.

⁹¹² Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 98.

to be associated with rituals of Hathor, particularly those decorated with the head of Hathor.⁹¹³ For example, one Old Kingdom tomb scene from El Hammamiya depicted female dancers holding clappers with one or both hands.⁹¹⁴ The importance of clappers in the performances of the *hnr* are indicated in another scene, from the tomb of Khafkhufu, where a female dance instructor reached into a chest containing clappers.⁹¹⁵ Scenes of the *hnr* performing during *Heb-Sed* festivals, such as that of Amenhotep III, also included clappers.⁹¹⁶ Clappers, which were amuletic or mechanical means of warding off spirits, came in ivory, bone, or wood and were very common in 11th and 12th Dynasty tombs at Thebes and Lisht.⁹¹⁷ Given the close association of clappers to Type A figurines, Betsy Bryan had argued that the etymology of *hnr* came not from the verb “to confine,” as previous scholars had assumed, but rather from *hnj* “to keep rhythm.” She also had argued that the U31 hieroglyph, , that determined the word should be reinterpreted as a pair of curved sticks, i.e., a clapper.⁹¹⁸

Occurring in private Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period tombs,⁹¹⁹ hand-shaped clappers comprise the vast majority of those discovered at Asasif and Lisht. This design likely harkened to Hathor’s persona as the “hand” of Atum, used in his creation of life via masturbation.⁹²⁰ A harpist depicted in the Middle Kingdom tomb of Senbi at Meir celebrated this connection between Hathor and the clappers, singing, “Exalted is Hathor, (the lady) of love, O

⁹¹³ Hayes, *Scepter*, I, 247; Wente, “Hathor,” 86-7; Nord, “The term *hnr*,” 141-2; Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 113-14; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 345.

⁹¹⁴ A. el-Khouli and N. Kanawati, *The Old Kingdom Tombs of El-Hammamiya* (Sydney: Australian Centre for Egyptology, 1990), pl. 67.

⁹¹⁵ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 95; Bryan, “Etymology,” 49; W.K. Simpson, *Giza Mastabas III: The Mastabas of Kawab, Khafkhufu I and II* (Boston: MFA, 1978), fig. 48.

⁹¹⁶ Wente, “Hathor,” 84 and the references cited therein.

⁹¹⁷ Hayes, *Scepter*, I, 247; A. Capel, “Menat counterpoise,” in *Mistress of the House*, 101, Cat. 35d.

⁹¹⁸ Bryan, “Etymology,” 47-48, 52-53.



⁹¹⁹ Petrie, *Diospolis Parva*, 53, pl. XXVII; 1927, 43; A. C. Mace, “The Egyptian expedition 1920-1921: I. Excavations at Lisht,” *BMAA* 16.11/2 (1921): 18, fig. 16; Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 110.

⁹²⁰ D.C. Patch, “Clapper,” in *Hatshepsut*, ed. C. Roehrig, 175, Cat. 99; Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 95.

castanet-players, O castanet-players!” These musicians, who wore *menat*-necklaces, in return, sung to the goddess, “O Golden One in the meadows, Gold One in the meadows, the places – the places of her will – may you be gracious, O Golden One!”⁹²¹

Likewise, Hathor had an affinity for the harp,⁹²² such as the above-mentioned scene from the tomb of Senbi. Thus, it was appropriate to praise her “with delightful songs, for ... the mistress of jubilation, the mistress of music, the queen of harp-playing, the lady of the dance.”⁹²³ Sometimes, scenes labeled these harpists as members of a *hnr*-troupe,⁹²⁴ while others designated them as the daughters of the deceased,⁹²⁵ indicating the interchangeability of this role.⁹²⁶

3.2.1.5 The Role of the *hnr*

Given the connection of Type A figurines to the *hnr*, an examination of the institution is warranted. Earlier scholarship had assumed the term *hnr*, based on the verb *hnr* “to confine,” referred to women kept in a royal harem.⁹²⁷ Indeed, a late Middle Kingdom series of directives issued to the Great Prison at Thebes concerning residents who absconded from required work referred to the institution as  or .⁹²⁸ Work in the 1980’s by Nord⁹²⁹ and Ward⁹³⁰ disproves this meaning of *hnr* for the women. For instance, Nord had pointed out that often men as well as married women used the title *hnr*. Instead, they appear linked with singing, dancing,

⁹²¹ Kitchen, *Poetry*, 135; Blackman, *Meir I*, 23-4, pl. 2.

⁹²² H. Buchberger, “Sexualität und Harpenspiel -Notizen zu ‘sexuellen’ Konnotation der altägyptischen Ikonographie,” *GM* 66 (1983): 11-43.

⁹²³ Bleeker, *Hathor and Thoth*, 54.

⁹²⁴ Ex: Newberry, *Beni Hasan I*, 31, pl. 7; Lilyquist, *Mirrors*, fig. 131.

⁹²⁵ Ex: in the tomb-chapel of Pepi-anekh at Meir (Blackman, *The Rock Tombs of Meir IV*, 31, pl. 9).

⁹²⁶ Morris, “Paddle dolls,” 96.

⁹²⁷ Hayes, *Scepter I*, 219.

⁹²⁸ W.C. Hayes, *A Papyrus of the Late Middle Kingdom in the Brooklyn Museum [Papyrus Brooklyn 25.1446]* (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1955), pl. 1 (rt. 4d), pl. 2 (rt. 1d, 3d, 14d), pl. 6 (rt. 54). For translation of relevant sections of the papyrus, see Hayes, *Papyrus*, 19-66, especially 34-58.

⁹²⁹ Nord, “The Term *hnr*,” 137-45.

⁹³⁰ Ward, *Essays*, 57-80.

and clapping, as seen in tomb scenes from the Old Kingdom until the New Kingdom.

Specifically, the existence of the office of "overseer of the *hnr*" indicates that the *hnr* was a formalized institution of singers and dancers.⁹³¹ These performers occurred in several different settings in the artistic and inscriptional evidence,⁹³² particularly in association with Hathor and childbirth specifically.

The *hnr* of the royal and funerary cult appeared especially linked to Hathor in her role of re-stimulating the sun's generative powers, as seen in depictions of them performing alongside the daughters of the king or deceased.⁹³³ This role of Hathor was especially clear in an episode of The Contendings of Horus and Seth. In order to restore a despondent Re to his role as cosmic judge,⁹³⁴ she exposed her genitals, which elicited a laugh. Although a Ramesside papyrus preserves this text in its entirety, an extremely similar version appears to have been in circulation already by the Middle Kingdom.⁹³⁵

While *hnr*-troupes occurred for a number of deities, such as Bat, Wepwawet, Iunmutef, and Min, their regenerative role most closely connected them to Hathor, who they commonly invoked as "the Golden One," considering her patronage of music and also her status as a mother goddess who facilitated rebirth.⁹³⁶ This association is clear in the labels ("the *hnr* of Hathor") and song above the heads of musicians, dancers, and singers.⁹³⁷ The goddess appeared prominently in

⁹³¹ Ward, *Essays*, 77; Nord, "The Term *hnr*," 142-43.

⁹³² Nord, "The Term *hnr*," 145; Morris, "Paddle dolls," 73-74.

⁹³³ Nord, "The Term *hnr*," 145; Ward, *Essays*, 76; Kinney, *Dance*, 36; Troy, *Patterns of Queenship*, 90-92; Morris, "Paddle dolls," 74.

⁹³⁴ Morris, "Paddle dolls," 85.

⁹³⁵ R.B. Parkinson, *Voices from Ancient Egypt. An Anthology of Middle Kingdom Writings* (London: British Museum Press, 1991), 120-1; Morris, "Paddle dolls," 85.

⁹³⁶ Brunner-Traut, *Tanz*, 23; Nord, "The Term *hnr*," 141-2, 145.

⁹³⁷ Blackman, *The Rock Tombs of Meir I*, 23.

the mortuary temples of Khufu, Khafre, and Menkaure in their statue programs, with her connection to private mortuary cults occurring shortly after Khafre.⁹³⁸

Importantly, there is evidence to support the *hnrt* dancers serving a childbirth function, at least for the elite. As we will discuss below,⁹³⁹ the story of the birth of three princes in Papyrus Westcar described the deities disguising themselves as dancers and, on that basis, the husband allowed them to enter the birth chamber to assist the delivery. In Saqqara, the 6th Dynasty tomb chapel of princess Watetkhethor included a scene of dancers,⁹⁴⁰ identified in the third register as *hnrt*, dancing before Watetkhethor. The young girls seem to use their heads, torsos, hands, and legs in a variety of movements, some slow but others more acrobatic, like the high-kicking dance which appeared for the first time in this period.⁹⁴¹ Unlike elsewhere in the chapel, the owner sat alone, without her son, and the second register of the scene indicated the function of the dancing: *mk swt sšt3 n msjt* “see, it is the secret of birth.”⁹⁴² The third register goes to state *mk sšt3 n hnrt nbt* “See the secret of every performer,” and *mk jkjk hbt msjt* “See, darkness(?)⁹⁴³ is the abomination of birth.” The representations of Ipet/Taweret and Aha on some Type A1⁹⁴⁴ also indicate a connection to fertility,⁹⁴⁵ given their usual association with childbirth rituals.⁹⁴⁶

⁹³⁸ Gillam, “Priestesses of Hathor,” 212, 216, 226.

⁹³⁹ See § 5.4.

⁹⁴⁰ N. Kanawati and M. Abner-Radzig, *Mereruka and his family, Part II: The tomb of Waatetkhethor* (ACE 26; Oxford: Aris and Phillips, 2004), 25-26, pl. 26-31 and 60.

⁹⁴¹ Brunner-Traut, *Tanz*, 23; N. Kanawati, “Some iconographic Peculiarities in the Teti Cemetery,” in *L'art de l'Ancient Empire égyptien: Actes du colloque organisé au Musée du Louvre par le Service Culturel les 3 et 4 Avril 1998*, ed. C. Ziegler (Paris: Musée du Louvre, 1999), 290-92.

⁹⁴² Kanawati and Abner-Radzig, *Waatetkhethor*, 26-27 translation of wall scene from Roth, “*Psš-kf*,” 140-141; Kinney, *Dance*, 257ff.

⁹⁴³ Reading of *kkw* from Roth, “*Psš-kf*,” 141.

⁹⁴⁴ Ex: Capel and Markoe, *Mistress*, 63; Hernández, “Paddle Dolls,” fig. 3.

⁹⁴⁵ Hernández, “Paddle Dolls,” 127, 129.

⁹⁴⁶ Wilkinson, *Gods and Goddesses*, 102-3, 185-6.

3.2.1.6 Conclusions

Type A figurines appear to have represented *hnr*-women, ritual performers who were associated with royal and private mortuary cults and the cults of deities, especially Hathor. While excavators found Type A1 only in tombs, it is currently unclear whether these objects had an original function in daily life like the birth tusks. Type A2 is more clearly multifunctional, with some examples in temples and a few in the town of Lahun. Both Types A1 and A2 have features, such as cowrie girdles,⁹⁴⁷ that are closely associated with fertility. Given the connection of dancers and the *hnrt* with childbirth,⁹⁴⁸ Type A figurines may in part have served in such situations, at least for royalty.

3.2.2 Type B: Stylized Handmade Figurines

Type B figurines (Figure 114) are modelled in the round in clay and of crude workmanship. The figure is of a slim woman with small breasts, long legs tapering into rudimentary feet, slim waist, flat stomach, fairly broad hips, and prominent buttocks. The face consists of a beak-shaped nose and horizontal slits for the eyes and eyebrows. The artisans for these figures always marked the pubic triangle by dots or incised lines and the navel, nipples, and dimples above the buttocks are marked by shallow depressions, sometimes emphasized with dots. Sometimes, the whole breast is circled with dots, often filled in with mud. The jewelry on these figures typically included modelled necklaces, incised bracelets, and incised girdles. Two different hairstyles are present: Type B1 consists of three smaller back plaits and two larger side plaits topped by a fillet, Type B2 is a fringe or fillet surrounding a convex disk pierced with holes. In her typology, Pinch had referred to the former as “Type 2” and the latter as “Type 3”. However, given the formal similarities between the two types and the 182+ headless fragments

⁹⁴⁷ See § 4.2.

⁹⁴⁸ See § 3.2.1.5 and § 5.4.

which could either belong to a type B1 or B2 figurine, it is more sensible to consider them as variations on the same type.

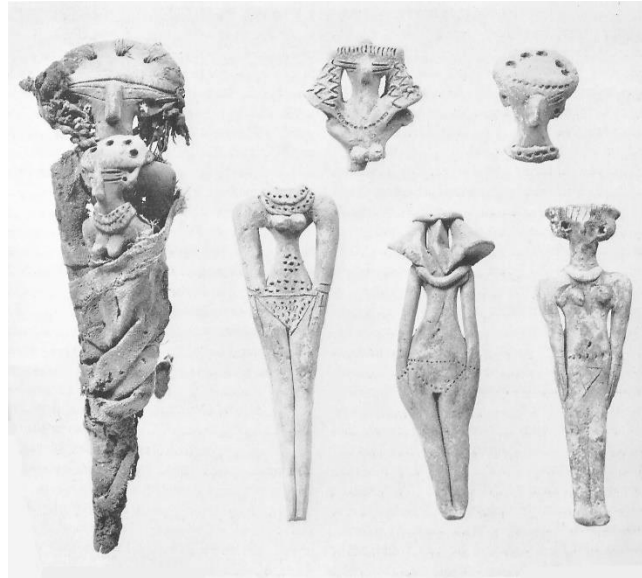


Figure 114 – Type B1 and B2 figurines from Thebes and Gebelein. Image from Hayes, *Scepter II*, fig. 6.

The hairstyle of type B1 figurines, with exception to the fillet, bears close resemblance to that of the type A2d figurines. A heavy lock of hair hangs on either side of the face, and three slender plaits, sometimes covered by ribbons flowing from the fillet,⁹⁴⁹ are shown at the back. On a few examples these plaits hang close together, but usually they are widely spaced, and the head appears to be partially shaven. The more elaborate figurines from the tombs in Esna include a headdress on top of the fillet. For the late Middle Kingdom through early Second Intermediate Period, these figurines tend to have more elaborate body decoration and be more steatopygous. A few also have silver loop earrings.⁹⁵⁰ This feature is notable given the association of silver with the moon,⁹⁵¹ and lunar deities including Thoth, Anubis, Isis, and the nocturnal aspect of Hathor,

⁹⁴⁹ Desroches-Noblecourt, “‘Concubine du mort’,” fig. 10.

⁹⁵⁰ Ex: B. J. Peterson and B. George, “Egypten,” In *Medelhavsmuseet: En Introduktion*, ed. C-G. Styrenius (Stockholm: Medelhavsmuseet, 1982), fig. 30; S. Morenz, “Eine Wöchnerin mit Siegelring,” *ZÄS* 83 (1958): pl.13

⁹⁵¹ S. Aufrère, *L’Univers minéral dans la pensée égyptienne* (BdÉ105; Cairo: IFAO, 1991), 411.

one of whose epithets was *ṛḫ wr n ntrwt* "the Silver of the Goddesses."⁹⁵² Interestingly, one example from Edfu (Figure 115) shows a child clinging to the back of the figure.⁹⁵³ Several other Type B figurines, particularly from Gebel Zeit (Figure 116), similarly depict a child.⁹⁵⁴

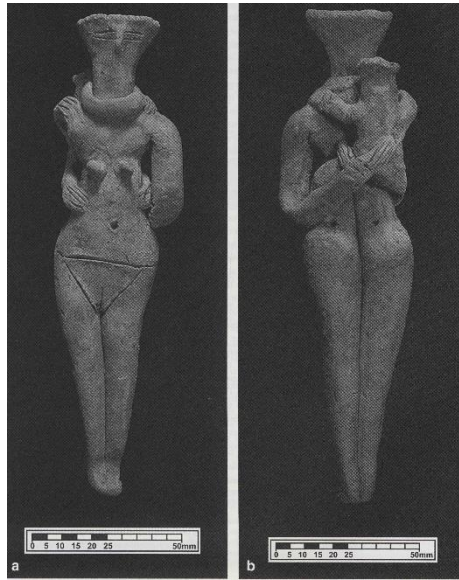


Figure 115 – Type B2 figurine with child, from Tell Edfu. Image from Moeller, "Tell Edfu," 96, Fig. 10a-b.

⁹⁵² P. Lacovara and Y. J. Markowitz, "Silver," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt III*, ed. D. B. Redford (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 287; Aufrère, *L'Univers minéral*, 411, 417-8.

⁹⁵³ N. Moeller, "Tell Edfu: Preliminary Report on Seasons 2005-2009," *JARCE* 46 (2010): 96, Fig. 10a-b.

⁹⁵⁴ Hayes, *Scepter II*, fig. 6 (leftmost); Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, pl. 48b (from Faras, Oxford GN 1912.949); N. Cherpion, *25 ans de découvertes archéologiques sur les chantiers de l'IFAO 1981-2006, Exposition au Musée égyptien Le Caire 9 septembre - 13 octobre 2007* (Cairo: IFAO, 2007), 53 (CSA 284, Cairo JE 97943, and JE 98126).



Figure 116 – Type B figurines with children from Gebel Zeit. Image from Cherpion, *25 ans de découvertes archéologiques*, 53.

While there is a tendency for less prominent buttocks, the main difference between types B2 versus B1 is the hair. The former consists of a fringe or fillet surmounting a convex disk pierced with three to six holes, which likely held artificial or real hair like the Type A1 and A2a figurines. Indeed, intact examples show artificial hair with mud pellets. This style may have derived from Nubian fashion. Most of these figurines also had pierced ears, with silver earrings surviving on the linen-wrapped examples from Thebes.⁹⁵⁵ Like one of the type B1 figurines, one type B2 figurine from a 17th Dynasty tomb included a female child.⁹⁵⁶ The Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period figurines tend to be taller and more steatopygous, with more elaborate body decorations, such as circles of dots around the navel, and smaller discs sloping back almost on a level with the fringe. The tattoos and steatopygous form likely served to emphasize the fecundity aspect of the female form, as also seen in plaque figurines. In contrast,

⁹⁵⁵ Hayes, *Scepter* II, 17, fig. 6.

⁹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

the New Kingdom stylization tended to depict the more standardized slim figure seen in much of Egyptian art.

Unlike Type A figurines, Type B tended to occur in temples (~52.8 %), particularly those to Hathor outside Egypt. Indeed, excavators located a little less than a third (~29.6%) of the objects from known contexts in tombs and even less in towns (~17.7%). This concentration suggests that Type B were mainly votive in function, with their occurrence outside Egypt normal given the lack of Middle Kingdom temple votives within Egypt.⁹⁵⁷ The excavated contexts of these figures of mostly the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period were predominantly Upper Egyptian (52.7%), with those from the Hathor temple at Gebel Zeit by the Red Sea coast (41.3%) likely imported. Excavators found some in Nubia (4.9%), especially at the Hathor temple in Faras, and only a few from areas of Egypt outside Upper Egypt (1%). While the figurines confirmed to be Type B1 occurred from the Middle Kingdom through the Second Intermediate Period, Type B2 continued into the 18th Dynasty. However, there are many Type B without heads, so it is possible some of them dating to the 18th Dynasty originally came from Type B1 figures. There is an occasional presence in Pan Grave areas, with two Type B1 figurines excavated from Pan graves at Diospolis Parva.⁹⁵⁸ Of the very few tombs in which excavators could assign the figurines to a specific owner, two owners are male⁹⁵⁹ and three are perhaps male.⁹⁶⁰ The presence of female owners of these objects in 18th Dynasty tombs, however, indicates that both genders, adults and children, possessed these figurines.

⁹⁵⁷ For more on Middle Kingdom temple votives, see below, § 6.5.2.

⁹⁵⁸ Petrie, *Diospolis Parva*, 53, pl. 26 (one of which is Oxford Ashmolean E 1919).

⁹⁵⁹ Petrie, *Denderah*, pl. 21; Hayes, *Scepter II*, 16-17, fig. 6.

⁹⁶⁰ Downes, *Esna*, 86, 88, figs. 50, 56.

3.2.3 Type C: Modius Headdress Figurines

These pottery figurines, also known as Pinch's Type 4 (Figure 117),⁹⁶¹ were mostly shaped in an open mold and so have flat backs. Some that were molded on both sides depicted a striated back plait,⁹⁶² while others showed the back of the head partially shaven and the remaining hair gathered into a long plait.⁹⁶³ The latter is a style also seen with Type A2d and B1 figurines,⁹⁶⁴ so it had notable continuity. They have small breasts, rudimentary feet, slim waists and hips, and flat stomachs. Their limbs are sometimes elongated. Some had traces of yellow paint on the body, black on the hair, and red on the headdress,⁹⁶⁵ while a couple from Medinet Habu had red-painted bodies and black hair.⁹⁶⁶ One interesting variant depicted a woman seated and breastfeeding an infant (Figure 118),⁹⁶⁷ which indicates a function related to children.

⁹⁶¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 204-5.

⁹⁶² Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, pl. 4.

⁹⁶³ Ex: Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, pl. 43.

⁹⁶⁴ See above, § 3.2.1.2 and 3.2.2.

⁹⁶⁵ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, pl. 52.423; Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 141.

⁹⁶⁶ Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, no. 10, pl. 4a-b.

⁹⁶⁷ Bruyère, *Rapport* 14, 97, fig. 41.



Figure 117 – Type C figurines from Deir el-Medina. Image from Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, fig. 58.

The type dates primarily to the 18th Dynasty, though they continue into the Ramesside and Late New Kingdom to the Third Intermediate Period. They occurred predominantly in towns (78.5%), particularly Deir el-Medina, though they also can occur in Hathor temples (11.4%) and tombs (10.1%).⁹⁶⁸ Based on context, the female with modius-headdress appears to have been an Upper Egyptian type, with only nine examples occurring elsewhere. The modius headdress appears particularly associated with royal women and female deities such as Taweret,⁹⁶⁹ indicating an attempt to link non-elite women with female divinities.

Pinch originally subdivided this type into ones where the arms hang at the sides (Type 4A) and those where the left arm is folded across the breast.⁹⁷⁰ However, at least three figurines

⁹⁶⁸ Percentages from those with clear excavation contexts.

⁹⁶⁹ Ex: C. Graves-Brown, *Dancing for Hathor: Women in ancient Egypt* (London; New York: Continuum, 2010), 90, 140; Ibid., *Daemons and Spirits in Ancient Egypt* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2018), 43, 119; B. Bryan, “A Newly Discovered Statue of a Queen from the Reign of Amenhotep III,” in *Servant of Mut: Studies in Honor of Richard A. Fazzini*, ed. S. D’Auria (PdÄ 28; Leiden: Brill, 2007) 34-8.

⁹⁷⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 204.

from Deir el-Medina held the right arm across the chest instead.⁹⁷¹ Instead, I divided Type C into those with arms at the sides (Type C1) and those with an arm folded across the breast (Type C2). Pinch had noted that earlier versions of Type C tended to have crudely incised details and headdresses pierced for the insertion of hair, like Type B2.⁹⁷² Thus, Type C appears to have been an evolution of Type B2, with the previous disc replaced by the modius.

In six instances of Type C2,⁹⁷³ the figurines appear to be holding something, which Bruyère had thought to either be a lotus or *menat*-necklace, though the object remains uncertain.⁹⁷⁴ There is a unique example which appears to hold the scepter of Ptah (Figure 119), comprising of the 'wꜣs scepter', surmounted by an *ꜥnh* and *ḏd* symbols.⁹⁷⁵ If the object is that staff, it was perhaps related to his roles as god of craftsmen and hearer of prayers, since the workmen at Deir el-Medina especially worshipped Ptah.⁹⁷⁶ From Faras, one intact figurine held a blue lotus flower between the breasts (Figure 120).⁹⁷⁷ The blue lotus, given its known solar symbolism,⁹⁷⁸ likely invoked a successful birth akin to that of the sun god. As we will see below, medical/magical spells often compared the newborn child to the sun god,⁹⁷⁹ and the blue lotus was a minor motif on birth wands.⁹⁸⁰

⁹⁷¹ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 139, fig. 58, pls. 43-4; Backhouse, "Female figurines," 28-29, Figs. 2.10-12.

⁹⁷² Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 205.

⁹⁷³ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 141.

⁹⁷⁴ Backhouse, "Female figurines," 28.

⁹⁷⁵ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 141, pl. XLIII.

⁹⁷⁶ R. Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003), 124-5.

⁹⁷⁷ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 205, pls. 8.8, 49b = BM 51263.

⁹⁷⁸ See Schlögl, *Der Sonnengott auf der Blüte*; Dittmar, *Blumen und Blumensträuße*.

⁹⁷⁹ See § 5.2.

⁹⁸⁰ See below, § 6.3.1.



Figure 118 (left) – Type C holding a child, from Deir el-Medina. Image from Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, fig. 41.
Figure 119 (middle) – Type C holding an object, from Deir el-Medina. Image from Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, pl. XLIII.1.
Figure 120 (right) – Type C holding a lotus blossom, from Faras. Image from Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, pl. 49b.

3.2.4 Type D: Figurines Wearing Perfume Cone

Type D figurines (Figure 121), dating predominately to the late 18th to 19th Dynasties, are those unattached to bed models that wear a perfume cone, which can range from tapering to large and bulbous. They are made of pottery and appear to be a type almost exclusive to Deir el-Medina⁹⁸¹ and Amarna,⁹⁸² with a few from Memphis.⁹⁸³ The vast majority bear paint, with red bodies, white cones, and black hair. In seven of the figurines from Deir el-Medina, remnants of paint also occurred on the back, which may indicate that they were originally held.⁹⁸⁴ Earrings occur on at least five pieces from Deir el-Medina, and two depict a lotus flower and headband. Backhouse reported five examples from Deir el-Medina where black outline heavily emphasized the eyes are emphasized heavily with black outline.⁹⁸⁵ Two figurines bear white stripes, which

⁹⁸¹ Bruyère, *Rapport*, pl. XLIII-IV; Trapani, "Statuette Femminili," Table 1, S.7814 and 10032.

⁹⁸² Stevens, *Private religion*, 85-87.

⁹⁸³ Giddy, *Kom Rabi'a*, 37, 39.

⁹⁸⁴ Backhouse, "Female figurines," 29.

⁹⁸⁵ Backhouse, "Female figurines," 29, e.g. Fig. 2.13.

Backhouse had considered possibly dress for priestesses,⁹⁸⁶ like that worn by Type A1 figurines. Alternatively, the white paint may represent the see-through dresses worn by many of the mothers depicted on the Wochenlaube ostraca.⁹⁸⁷ Indeed, the cones on Type D render these women quite similar to those on the ostraca and a domestic stela dedicated to Taweret (Figure 66). One figurine from Deir el-Medina is seated and holds an infant (Figure 122),⁹⁸⁸ indicating a more specific childbirth function, as opposed to being general symbols of fertility.



Figure 121 – Type D figurines with one Type E, from Deir el-Medina. Image from Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, pl. XLIV.1.

Many of these originally belonged to Pinch's Type 6A, which were figurines meant to be placed on a bed model.⁹⁸⁹ However, the contexts of many of her Type 6A cannot securely place them in association with bed models, with only 26 such bed models from Amarna and six from Deir el-Medina.⁹⁹⁰ Likewise, while Pinch's Type 6A is defined by the arms placed at the sides, but excavations at Amarna only encountered 21 of the figurines originally designated as Type 6A

⁹⁸⁶ Backhouse, "Female figurines," 30-31, e.g. e.g. Fig. 2.16.

⁹⁸⁷ For these ostraca, see below, § 7.4.1.

⁹⁸⁸ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, fig. 60.

⁹⁸⁹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 207, 232-3, List 6.

⁹⁹⁰ For the bed models, see § 3.3.

with this posture.⁹⁹¹ Another issue with Pinch's typology was, while the perfume cones were regarded as a typical feature of Type 6A, Amarna excavations only encountered 18 examples.⁹⁹² Thus, it is safer to consider the Type D figurines as their own category.⁹⁹³

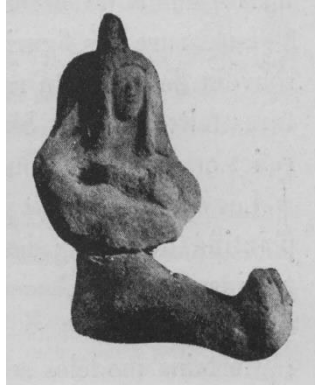


Figure 122 – Type D figurine holding a child. Image from Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, fig. 60.

3.2.5 Type E: Standalone Figurines Without Cone or Headdress

These mold-made figurines can occur in faience (Figure 124) or pottery (Figure 123).⁹⁹⁴ They are generally made in an open mold. They ranged mostly between 3 and 6 cm high, though some would have been 10 cm.⁹⁹⁵ Some examples, particularly from Faras, were significantly smaller (Figure 125),⁹⁹⁶ indicating an amuletic function. Faience examples typically had details added in dark blue. The women had elongated limbs, small breasts, slim waists, and flat stomachs. These figurines generally lacked bodily adornment.⁹⁹⁷ One figurine from Kom Rabi'a holds a mirror (Figure 126), an object associated with other female figurines as well as the

⁹⁹¹ Stevens, *Private religion*, 85.

⁹⁹² Stevens, *Private religion*, 86.

⁹⁹³ Trapani, "Statuette femminili," 538.

⁹⁹⁴ Pinch Type 5: Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 205-7.

⁹⁹⁵ Ex: Brussels MR E 725.

⁹⁹⁶ BM 51361; Oxford PR 1912.89.218-20.

⁹⁹⁷ Exceptions are H. R. Hall, "The smaller objects," in *The XIth Dynasty Temple at Deir el-Bahari Part III*, ed. E. Naville and H. R. Hall (MEEF 32; London, 1913), 14, 16, pl. 24.2; Hayes, *Scepter* II, 163; M. Nelson, "La tombe d'une nourrice royale du début de la XVIIIème dynastie découvertes au Ramesseum: concession funéraire STI.Sa05/pu01," *Memnonia* 17 (2006): 125.

Wochenlaube.⁹⁹⁸ At least four had paint. Type E figurines from Deir el-Bahari, which are unusual in being worked on both sides, wore a standard tripartite wig,⁹⁹⁹ but on a third the back of the head is partially shaven and the hair is divided into three plaits.¹⁰⁰⁰ Such standalone figurines tended to occur towns (61.7%) and Hathor temples (34.8%),¹⁰⁰¹ indicating that they served both domestic and votive functions, unlike many of the other, overwhelmingly domestic New Kingdom types. Interestingly, though spread from Nubia through Egyptian territories in Syro-Palestine like Beth Shan, they appear to have been largely Upper Egyptian (61.7%), with noticeable numbers also in Amarna (23.4%) and Nubia (7.9%). Notably, the figurines are locally-made, and appeared as part of the intermixed Egyptian-Canaanite population and religious practices of the site.¹⁰⁰² Type E also exhibits continuity, dating from the 18th Dynasty to the Third Intermediate Period.

⁹⁹⁸ See §§ 3.2.1.3, 3.2.1.4.2, 3.2.5, and 7.4.1.

⁹⁹⁹ Cambridge Fitz. 55.1907; London BM 41734.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Bolton 48.04.19.

¹⁰⁰¹ Percentages from those with clear excavation contexts.

¹⁰⁰² A. Mazar, "The Egyptian Garrison Town at Beth Shean," in *Egypt, Canaan and Israel: History, Imperialism, Ideology and Literature: Proceedings of a Conference at the University of Haifa, 3-7 May 2009*, ed. S. Bar et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 169-176, esp. 172-3 and 175-6.

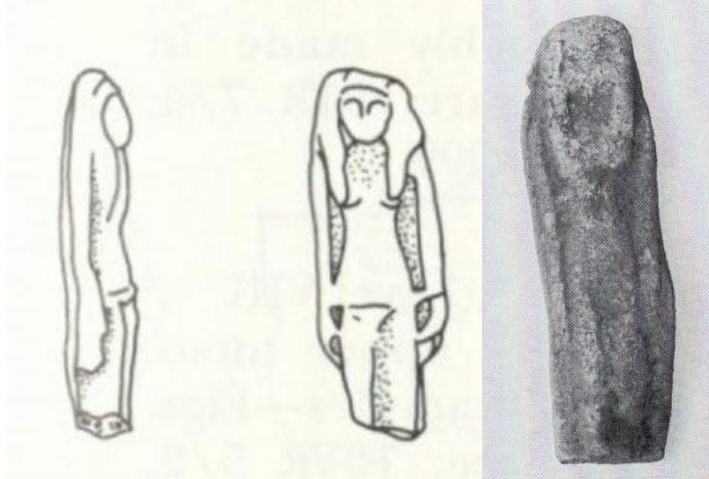


Figure 123 (left) – Terracotta Type 5 figurine from Beth Shan. Image from James and McGovern, *Beth Shan I*, pl. 76.1.

Figure 124 (right) – Faience Type 5 figurine from Gebelein. Image from Trapani, “Deposit of female figurines,” fig. 5.

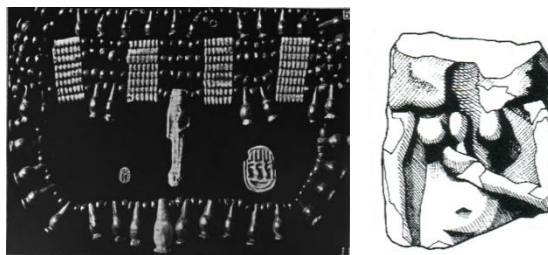


Figure 125 (left) – Type 5 figurine from necklace. Image from Engelbach, *Riqqeh and Memphis VI*, pl. LI.5.
Figure 126 (right) – Type 5 holding mirror from Kom Rabi’a, Memphis. Image from Giddy, *Kom Rabia*, pl. 12.1464.

3.2.6 Type F: Woman-on-bed Figurines

This figurine type (Figure 127), with a woman attached to a bed, can be divided into those without a child (Type F1) and those depicting a child (Type F2). Among the latter, they can further be divided into figurines that do not nurse the child (Type F2a) and those that do (Type F2b). Most F2 depict the woman frontally (Figure 131 and 135), though some F2b show the woman in profile (Figure 134). The figures are slender and flat-chested with elongated limbs.

They frequently wore full wigs, round earrings,¹⁰⁰³ perfume cones.¹⁰⁰⁴ Most of figurines were in terracotta, though some are in green glaze and faience. A few examples exhibit tattoos on the thighs, representing a frontal Bes.¹⁰⁰⁵ Of the figurine types, Type F most closely resembles the iconography we will also see in the Wochenlaube ostraca.

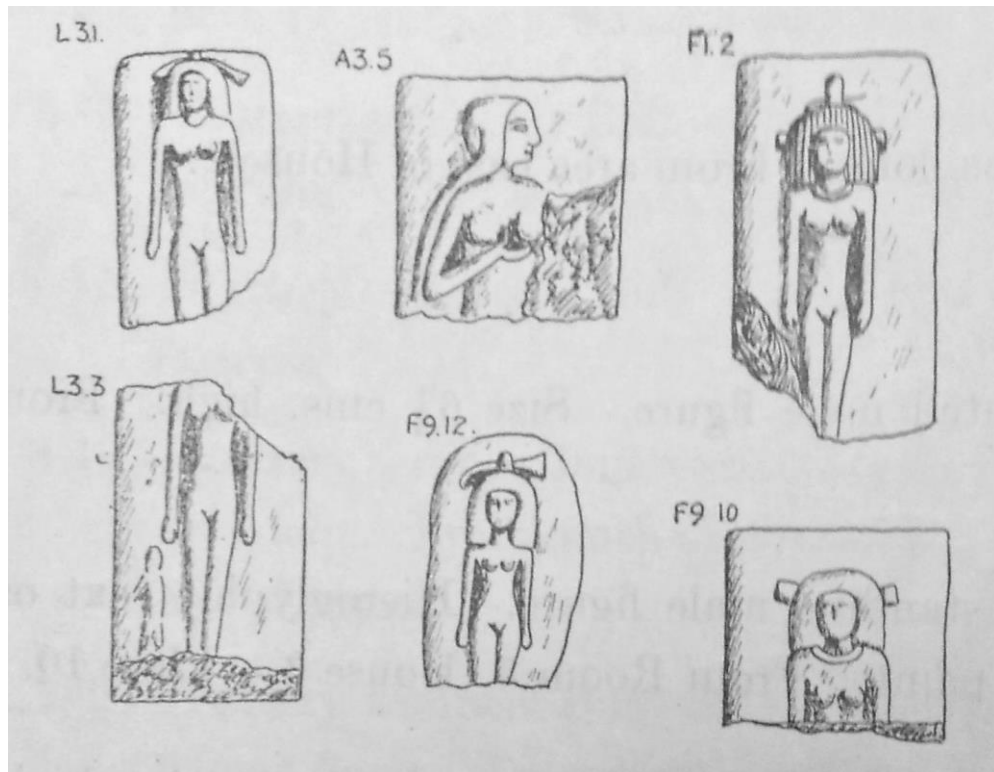


Figure 127 – Type F figurines from Kuban, Nubia. Image from Emery and Kirwan, *Excavation and Survey of Wadi es Sebu and Adindan I*, fig. 32.

They occurred predominantly in town contexts (~68%), with some from temple contexts (~13.6%) and others from tombs (~18.3%).¹⁰⁰⁶ They date primarily between the mid-late 18th

¹⁰⁰³ Ex: Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 142, fig. 59.2; Dothan, "Female figurines," 150-2, fig. 6.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Ex: Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, pl. 44.2; Brussels MR E 02950; W. Honroth et al., "Bericht über die Ausgrabungen auf Elephantine in den Jahren 1906-1908," *ZÄS* 46 (1910): 30-2, fig. 8; W. Kaiser et al., "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine 15./16/ Grabungsbericht," *MDAIK* 44 (1988): pl. 58d.

¹⁰⁰⁵ EEF, *Catalogue of Egyptian antiquities found by Prof. Flinders Petrie and students at Lahun and Sedment, 1920 and 1921* (London: BSAE, 1922), 10; Karlin, "Sanctuaire d'Hathor," 350; G. Pinch, "Childbirth and female figures at Deir el Medina and el'Amarna" *Orientalia* 52 (1983): pl. 6.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Percentages among Type F figurines with clear contexts.

Dynasty and Third Intermediate Period, though there is some evidence of this type continuing in later periods.¹⁰⁰⁷ Though excavators found these figurines in sites from Nubia to Syro-Palestine, they predominately appeared in Upper Egyptian sites (62.6%). They also appear in significant numbers in Middle Egypt (11.9%) and Lower Egypt (15%). Interestingly, some late New Kingdom to Third Intermediate Period figurines, all Type F2b, showed the woman wearing a wig akin to locks of the mother figurine in Wochenlaube scenes.¹⁰⁰⁸



Figure 128 – Type F figurines from Elephantine. Image from Honroth et al., “Bericht,” Abb. 8.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Ex: D.B. Redford, “Preliminary Report of the First Season of Excavation in East Karnak, 1975-76,” *JARCE* 14 (1977): 14, pl. 8.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Emery and Kirwan, *Wadi es-Sebua*, fig. 32 (A3.5); Michalowski et al., *Tell Edfou 1939*, pl. XXV.6; R. Anthes, *Mit Rahineh 1956* (Philadelphia: University Museum, 1965), 127-8, nos. 242 and 245, pl. 49; Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, Cat. 36.

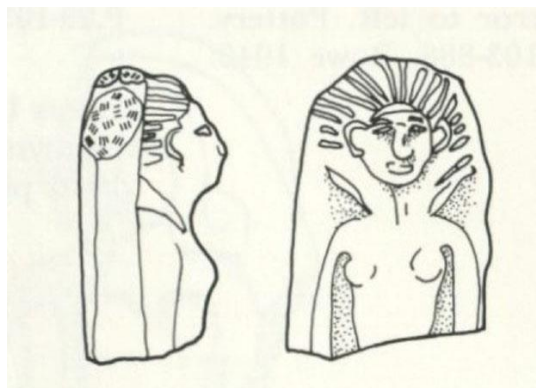


Figure 129 (left) – Type F with radiating hairstyle, from Memphis. Image from Giddy, *Kom Rabi'a*, pl. 12.1862.
Figure 130 (right) – Type F with radiating hairstyle, from Beth Shan. Image from James and McGovern, *Beth Shan I*, pl. 76.5.

Type F figurines had stylistic features that appear to have been either regional or site-specific. For example, those from Nubia to Middle Egyptian sites were more likely to feature pillows and necklaces than those from Lower Egypt. Of those with known preserved paint, figurines from Deir el-Medina and Medinet Habu had predominantly red on the body, sometimes yellow, and black on the wig,¹⁰⁰⁹ while those from Edfu and Aswan tended to have white paint.¹⁰¹⁰ Type F figures from Aswan tended to have heavy curled wigs (Figure 128),¹⁰¹¹ while figurines featuring a fillet on the head almost all occurred in Middle Egypt.¹⁰¹² A couple of figurines from Memphis and Beth Shan¹⁰¹³ have an unusual radiating hairstyle (Figures 129-130).¹⁰¹⁴ The style similar to the fluted hairstyle of some female figurines from Syro-Palestine,¹⁰¹⁵ indicating the former took inspiration from the latter. Those with long vertical plaits

¹⁰⁰⁹ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, pl. 44.2; Teeter, *Baked Clay*, Cat. 21, 23, 29, 36.

¹⁰¹⁰ P. Ballet and Chr. Lyon-Caen, "Le matériel de terre cuite et crue," in *Les fouilles francaises d'Éléphantine (Assuan) 1906-1911*, ed. É. Delange (MAIBL 46; Paris, 2012): vol. I, 349-351, and vol. 2, 276-278; Michalowski et al., *Tell Edfou 1939*, 207-9, pl. 25.

¹⁰¹¹ Honroth et al., "Bericht," 30-2, fig. 8; Kaiser et al., "Stadt un Tempel von Elephantine," pl. 58d.

¹⁰¹² Deir el-Medina (Bruyère, *Rapport* 7, 12, fig. 4); Gurob (*KGH*, pl. XVIII.37; Thomas, *Gurob*, pl. 54.707); Hermopolis (G. Roeder, *Vorläufiger Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Hermopolis 1928-30* (Hildesheim: Gebrüder Gerstenberg, 1931), 110, pl. 25e).

¹⁰¹³ For relevance of Beth Shan, see above, § 3.2.5.

¹⁰¹⁴ Memphis: Giddy, *Kom Rabi'a*, pl. 12.1862; Beth Shan: James and McGovern, *Beth Shan I*, pl. 76.5.

¹⁰¹⁵ See J. B. Pritchard, *Palestinian Figurines in Relation to Certain Goddesses* (Philadelphia: American Oriental Society, 1943), figs. 2, 6, 8; I. Cornelius, "The headgear and hairstyles of pre-Persian Palestinian

belonged primarily to the Theban region.¹⁰¹⁶ Two figurines from Middle Egypt depicted the infant upside down by the woman's leg (Figure 133),¹⁰¹⁷ with one showing the child held by nurse akin to those from the Wochenlaube (Figure 132).¹⁰¹⁸ A few Type F2a figurines from Deir el-Medina, Beth Shan, and Sawama also depict a mirror beside the woman (Figure 136).¹⁰¹⁹ Depictions of convolvulus, characteristic of the Wochenlaube ostraca and *lit clos*, occurred with several figurines (Figures 137-9),¹⁰²⁰ particularly from Gurob. A few figurines had snakes on the sides of the bed like those from Wochenlaube scenes (Figures 138-9).¹⁰²¹

female plaque figurines,” in *Bilder als Quellen/Images as sources: Studies on ancient Near Eastern artefacts and the Bible inspired by the work of Othmar Keel*, ed. S. Bickel et al. (Fribourg; Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 241-5, figs. 5-7

¹⁰¹⁶ Kuban (Emery and Kirwan, *Excavations and survey*, 52-3, fig. 32 [F1.2]); Edfu (M. Alliot, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Tell Edfou 1932* [Cairo: IFAO, 1933], 21, pl. 15; Michalowski et al., *Tell Edfou 1939*, pl. XXVI.1); Deir el-Medina (Bruyère, *Rapport 7*, 12, fig. 4; Bruyère, *Rapport 16*, pl. 44.2); Medinet Habu (Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, no. 32-33, pl. 11c, 12a); Karnak (Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 177-9, Cat. 2-3); Sawama (J. Bourriau and A. Millard, “The Excavation of Sawama in 1914 by G.A. Wainwright and T. Whittemore” *JEA* 57 (1971): 33); Gurob (*KGH*, pl. XVIII.37; Thomas, *Gurob*, pl. 54.707).

¹⁰¹⁷ Petrie, *Sedment*, pl. XL.20.

¹⁰¹⁸ Brunton, *Gurob*, pl. XXV.20. For Wochenlaube, see above, § 5.4.1.

¹⁰¹⁹ Deir el-Medina (Bruyère, *Rapport 7*, 12, fig. 4; Bruyère, *Rapport 16*, 142, fig. 59.1; Trapani, “Statuette Femminili,” 539, Table 1, S.7828; *Ibid.*, “Une particolare,” Fig.1.); Beth Shan (James and McGovern, *Beth Shan*, 165-6, pl. 77.3). Bourriau and Millard, “Sawama,” 34 and fig. 19 considered the object in Brooklyn 14.607-8 to be a “1,000”-sign, but better imagery indicates a mirror. Possible mirror in Brunton, *Gurob*, pl. XIII.6.

¹⁰²⁰ Petrie, *KGH*, pl. XVIII.37; *Ibid.*, *Giza and Rifeh*, pl. XIIIV.F; Brunton, *Gurob*, pl. XIII.6; Thomas, *Gurob*, pl. 55.710 (UC 16758); Pinch, “Childbirth and Female Figurines,” pl. 6 (BM 2371).

¹⁰²¹ Possibly Akhmim (Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, pl. 46b); Gurob (Brunton, *Gurob*, pl. XIII.6); possibly Thebes (Pinch, “Childbirth and female figures,” pl. 6); Deir el-Medina (Trapani, “Statuette Femminili,” 539, Table 1, S.7819).



Figure 131 – Various positions of infants in Type F2 figurines. Image from Bruyere, *Rapport* 16, pl. XLIV.2.

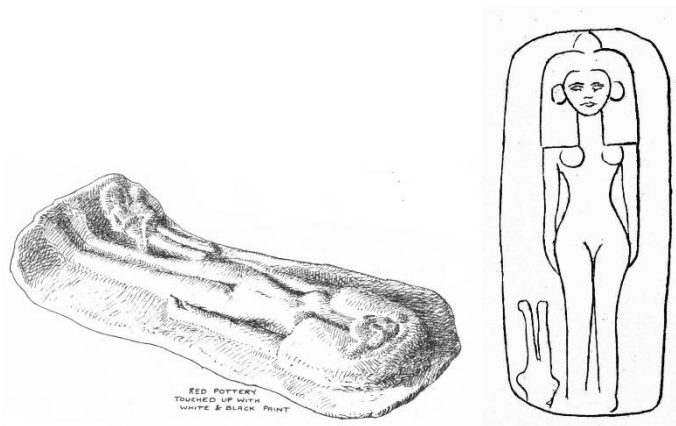


Figure 132 (left) – Type F2 with nurse. Image from Brunton, *Gurob*, pl. XXV.20.

Figure 133 (right) – Type F2 with upside-down child. Image from Petrie, *Sedment*, pl. XL.20.



Figure 134 (left) – Type F profile nursing position, with tripartite wig. Image from Petrie, *KGH*, pl. XVIII.32.

Figure 135 (middle) – Type F frontal nursing position, hair behind a shoulder. Image from Petrie, *KGH*, pl. XVIII.33.

Figure 136 (right) – Type F2 with mirror, Brooklyn 14.608. Image from museum online catalogue, accessed 1/31/2020.

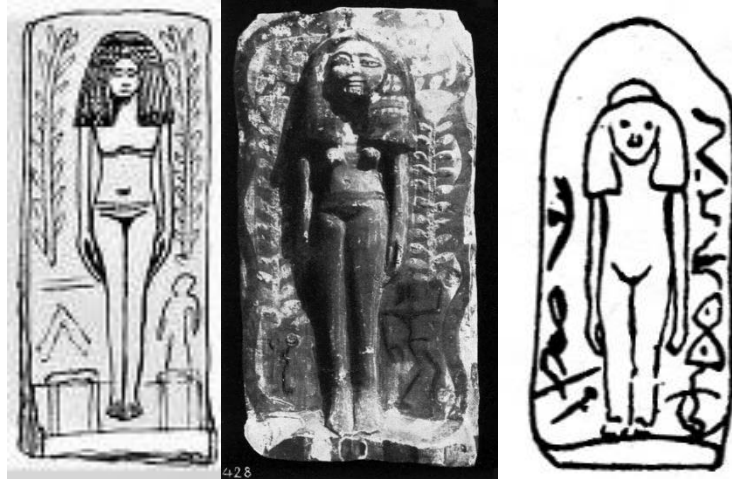


Figure 137 (left) – Type F2 figurine with convolvulus. Image from Petrie, *KGH*, pl. XVIII.37.

Figure 138 (middle) – Type F2 with convolvulus, snakes, and black male. Image from Brunton, *Gurob*, pl. XIII.6.

Figure 139 (right) – Type F2 with convolvulus and snakes. Image from Petrie, *Giza and Rifeh*, pl. XXXVII.F.

3.2.7 Type G: Nonidealized Woman with Applied Decoration

In contrast to the previous New Kingdom figurines, this type (Figure 140)¹⁰²² was handmade with applied decoration. The figurines wear a heavy wig with two thick lappets and have a narrow waist and wide hips. Many had applied circular eyes, low and centered breasts, and either pinched nose or no nose. The navels are large, either impressed or incised. The hands, when present, typically either rest upon the breasts¹⁰²³ or just the left.¹⁰²⁴ Some featured marking of the pubic region, while others featured dot motifs. Several figurines of the Mut Precinct, those from North Karnak, and one from Hermopolis have red paint remaining on their front surface.¹⁰²⁵ A couple from Karnak had orange slip.¹⁰²⁶ As discussed below, red paint on female

¹⁰²² Waraska, *Female Figurines*, Type 3.

¹⁰²³ Ex: Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, pl. 52.426-7 and 429.

¹⁰²⁴ Ex: MMA 12.181.216.

¹⁰²⁵ Roeder, *Hermopolis* (1959), 261, pl. 47.h-i; Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, 62; Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 31.

¹⁰²⁶ F. Leclère and S. Marchand, “Données Complémentaires sur les structures de briques crues rubéfiées du Musée de Plein Air de Karnak,” *Cahiers de Karnak* 10 (1995): 365.

figurines may relate to the blood of childbirth.¹⁰²⁷ Many of these figurines were broken at the torso.¹⁰²⁸

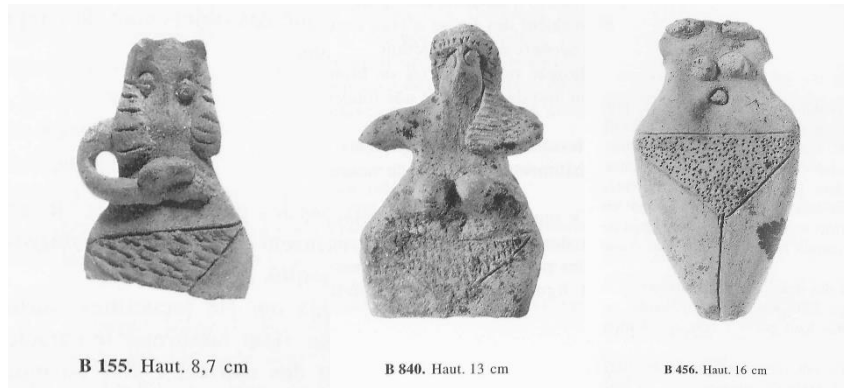


Figure 140 – Type G figurines from Karnak North. Image from Jacquet, *Karnak-Nord IX*, fig. 54.

Dating for this type has not always been clear, with some coming from undated contexts.¹⁰²⁹ The dating of this type ranges from the New Kingdom¹⁰³⁰ to predominantly the Third Intermediate Period or beginning of the Late Period.¹⁰³¹ The known contexts are typically temples¹⁰³² or townsites,¹⁰³³ but limited to Upper Egypt. This type appeared as one of the non-idealized female figurine traditions that were a feature of the Third Intermediate Period in Upper Egypt.¹⁰³⁴ The emphasis on the pubic region appears to have been a feature of handmade nude

¹⁰²⁷ See below in § 3.2.9.

¹⁰²⁸ Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 31.

¹⁰²⁹ Ex: Petrie, *Diospolis Parva*, pl. 26; Ibid., *Objects of Daily Use*, pl. 60, pl. 52. 426, 430, and 431; A. Elsasser and V.-M. Fredrickson, *Ancient Egypt: an exhibition at the Robert H. Lowie Museum of Anthropology of the University of California, Berkeley March 24-October 23, 1966* (Berkeley: Regents of University of California, 1966), 82.

¹⁰³⁰ MMA 12.181.216; Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, 62; Bruyere, *Rapport 1934-5*, pl. XLII, XLIII, and XLV; Backhouse, "Female figurines," 26, Fig. 2.6-9.

¹⁰³¹ Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, Cat. 53-62; Leclère and Marchand, "Données Complémentaires," 354; A. J. Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein III: The Town* (London: British Museum Press, 1993), 38-39, 49-50; Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 30-31.

¹⁰³² Ex: Karol Myśliwiec, *Keramik und Kleinfunde aus der Grabung im Tempel Sethos' I. In Gurna* (Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern, 1987), 181, 182 ill. 2166-7, pl. 32.2-3.

¹⁰³³ Bruyere, *Rapport 1934-5*, pl. XLII, XLIII, and XLV; Spencer, *Excavations at El-Ashmunein III*, 38-39, 49-50; Backhouse, "Female figurines," 26, Fig. 2.6-9.

¹⁰³⁴ Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, 59.

female figurines that continued from Middle Kingdom Types A1 and B, as well as plaque figurines.

3.2.8 Female Plaque Figurines

Another handmade type are plaque figurines, which come in various shapes ranging from genitals to full figures with applied and painted decoration. Although Pinch did not consider these plaques as part of her figurine typology, the feminine decoration, such as pubic triangles, breasts, and girdles, indicate that they represented another type of female figurine. Dating from the Middle through New Kingdoms, this type occurred almost exclusively in townsites from Nubia to Middle Egypt.¹⁰³⁵ Generally, these plaques have been difficult to categorize based on shape and decoration. However, study of contexted examples indicate several local and temporal differences based on shape of the plaque and decorative motifs.

The various types of plaque figurines featured both continuity and development. Common plaque shapes for both periods include pillars, rectangles, and disks. Geometric tattoos were likewise consistent, with dotted decoration around the navel typical of Egyptian sites while back dimples and thigh tattoos¹⁰³⁶ were characteristic of Nubian figurines. As we have discussed above,¹⁰³⁷ these tattoos also occurred on Type A2 and Type B figurines. It thus appears that geometric tattoos evolved from being associated with both female fertility and *hnr*-dancers to becoming a more private fertility motif in the New Kingdom. Red paint was also common in Middle Kingdom through Second Intermediate Period Nubian plaques. Cuboid and paddle shapes wearing necklaces were more typical of the Middle Kingdom through Second

¹⁰³⁵ From tombs: Petrie, *Giza and Rifeh*, pl. 13.23; Randall-MacIver and Mace, *El Amrah*, 90, pl. XLVIII; Michalowski et al, *Edfou 1939*, 207, pl. XXIV.337-8; MMA 22.1.1117 (12-13D., Lisht North).

¹⁰³⁶ Amara West (Stevens, "Female figurines and folk culture," 421-6.) and Buhen (Emery et al., *Fortress of Buhen*, 148-9, pls. 53-54.), with exception of Amarna (Stevens, *Private religion*, fig. II.3.12).

¹⁰³⁷ See §§ 3.2.1.2 and 3.2.2.

Intermediate Period, while femiform plaques and painted sherds characteristically date to the New Kingdom, particularly at Deir el-Medina. Some Middle Kingdom plaques depicted eyes and noses, which evolved to the full faces and heads of some New Kingdom figurines. Site-specific types also appeared in the New Kingdom, with a form with enlarged buttocks typical of New Kingdom Nubian sites and vaguely humanoid/trunk shapes occurring in Middle Kingdom Edfu and then in Deir el-Medina. The latter include applied necklaces similar to those of Type G.¹⁰³⁸

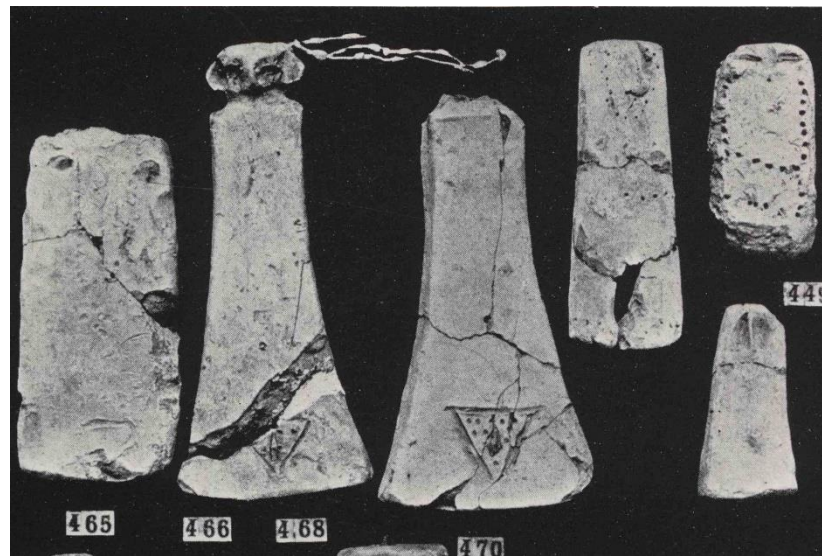


Figure 141 – Plaque figurines from Lahun, Middle Kingdom. Image from Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, pl. LIII.

¹⁰³⁸ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, pls. XLII.2 and XLV.1.

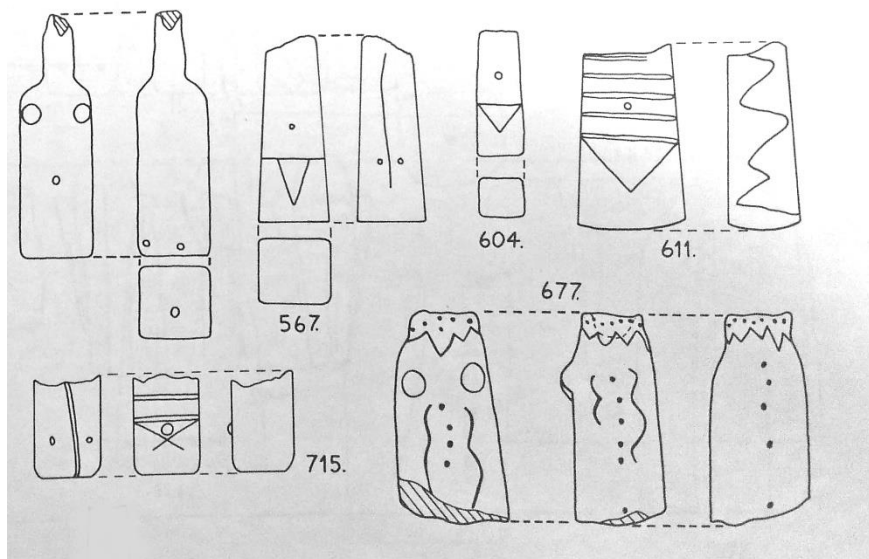


Figure 142 – Plaque figurines from Buhen, Middle Kingdom. Image from Emery et al., *Fortress of Buhen*, pl. 53.



Figure 143 – Plaque figurines from Edfu, Middle Kingdom. Image from Michalowski et al., *Edfu 1938*, pl. 36.1-5.



Figure 144 – Trunk-shaped plaque figurines from Edfu, Middle Kingdom. Image from Michalowski et al., *Edfu 1938*, pl. XXXVI.11-14.

Plaque figurines are more consistent in their emphasis on birth in ways contra official Egyptian art. At least seven known examples, with their enlarged bellies, appear to depict pregnancy,¹⁰³⁹ an unusual feature in Egyptian art. One unique example from Abydos has the genital area modelled in unusual detail and includes a semi-circular fold and a small, round knob.¹⁰⁴⁰ This detail possibly depicts a woman giving birth,¹⁰⁴¹ which was exceptionally rare in Egyptian art. These nonstandard representations, occurring exclusively in domestic contexts, indicate private non-elite religious practices, which appeared less subject to the rules of decorum for official Egyptian art. We also see pregnant and birth-giving women in pebble figures,¹⁰⁴² which appear to be another non-elite type of material.



Figure 145 – Disks, genital, and humanoid-shaped plaque figurines from Deir el-Medina. Image from Bruyere, *Rapport 16*, pl. XLIII.2.

¹⁰³⁹ Deir el-Medina (Bruyere, *Rapport 16*, XLV.1; Backhouse, "Female figurines," 26, Figs. 2.8-9); Edfu (Michalowski et al., *Edfu 1938*, 112-115, pl XXXVI.5, 11-14).

¹⁰⁴⁰ Randall-MacIver and Mace, *El Amrah*, pl. XLVIII; Patch, *Reflections of Greatness*, 37, Cat. 25b.

¹⁰⁴¹ Patch, *Reflections of Greatness*, 37, Cat. 25b; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 210.

¹⁰⁴² See below, § 3.4.



Figure 146 – Plaque figurines of various shapes from Deir el-Medina. Image from Bruyere, *Rapport 16*, pl. XLV.2.

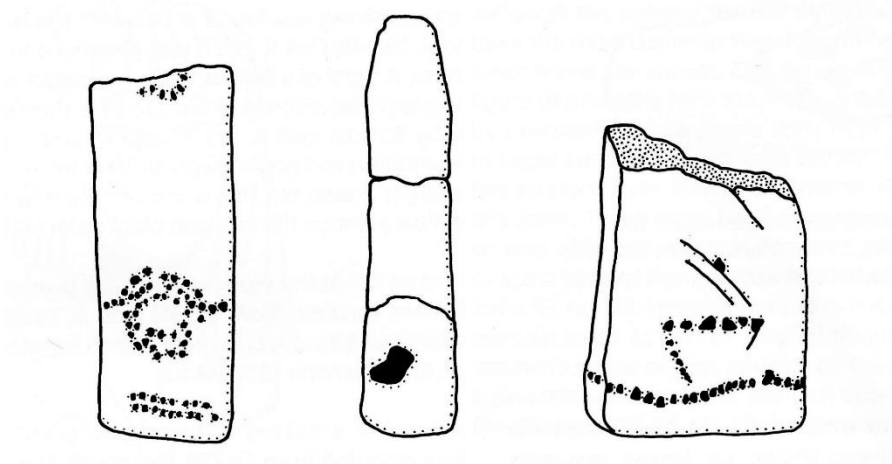


Figure 147 – Plaque figurines from Amarna. Image from Stevens, *Private Religion*, fig. ii.3.11.

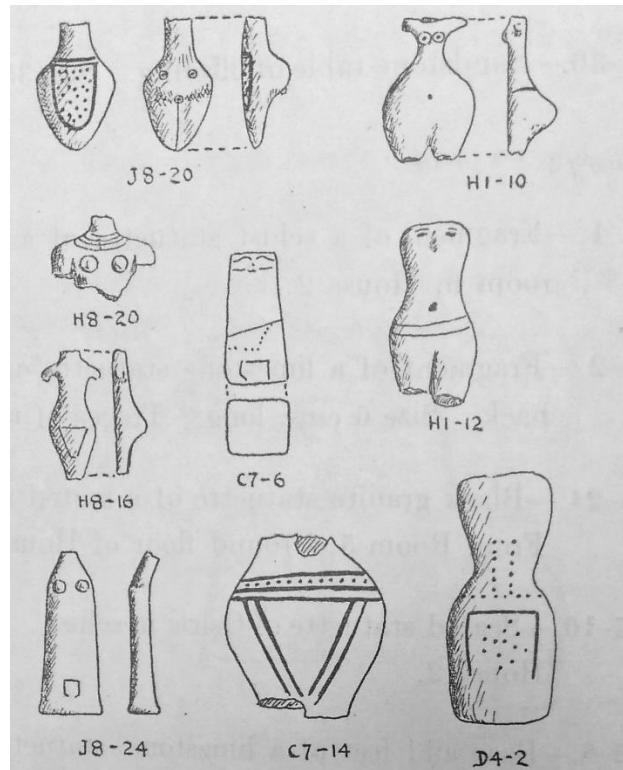


Figure 148 – Plaque figurines with a Type G from Kuban, New Kingdom. Image from Emery and Kirwan, *Excavation and Survey I*, fig. 33.



Figure 149 (left) – Plaque figurine possibly giving birth. Image from Patch, *Reflections of Greatness*, Cat. 25b.
Figure 150 (middle) – Pregnant plaque figurine, from Deir el-Medina. Image from Backhouse, “Female Figurines,” fig. 2.8.
Figure 151 (right) – Another pregnant plaque figurine from Deir el-Medina. Image from Backhouse, “Female Figurines,” fig. 2.9.

3.2.9 Theories of Use

Various scholars have proposed differing theories on the meaning and function of nude female figurines, as well as the status of the owners. Initial theories upon discovery of the figurines described them as “Nubian dancing girls” or “concubines for the dead,” while more recent theories attempt to connect them to a divine mother and/or to childbirth. Likewise, current scholarship has questioned the initial assumption that these figurines were for the lower classes.

One of the initial assumptions about the corpus is that Type B figurines were cheap imitations of Type A2 made for poorer people, which was largely based on the usage of clay and the more steatopygous features of the former.¹⁰⁴³ Archaeological evidence suggests, however, that this supposition is incorrect. For example, one Type B2 figurine belonged to the owner of an elaborately painted rishi coffin.¹⁰⁴⁴ At Esna, the burials of minor officials held examples of Types B1-2.¹⁰⁴⁵ Thus, expense did not appear to have been a factor for the use of Type A2 versus Type B figurines.¹⁰⁴⁶ Indeed, the crude features of Type B figurines, which are comparable to votive female figurines from the Early Dynastic and Old Kingdom, may reflect some continuity.¹⁰⁴⁷ Given the material's connection with the earth and its indestructibility once fired,¹⁰⁴⁸ the predominant use of clay for female figurines may hold symbolic meaning. Clay should thus not be regarded as a sculpting material used solely by the lower strata of society.¹⁰⁴⁹

¹⁰⁴³ Desroches-Noblecourt, “‘Concubines du mort’,” 8.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Hayes, *Scepter II*, 16, 31.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Downes, *Esna*, 86-9.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 224.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 224.

¹⁰⁴⁸ M. J. Raven, "Magical and symbolic aspects of certain materials in ancient Egypt," *VA* 4 (1988): 240.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Bianchi, "Symbols and Meanings," 24; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 224, citing Hayes, *Scepter II*, 16, 31: "One [ceramic] figurine belonged to the owner of an elaborately painted rishi coffin, indicating that the deceased was a man of some wealth and status.") Notes 390-393 with examples; Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 93.

Along the same vein, some of the first scholarship on the figurines suggested, based on the steatopygous physique of many of the Type B figurines, that they represented Nubians, or are derived from Nubian fertility figurines.¹⁰⁵⁰ There is some evidence for a Nubian connection. A few Pan Grave burials and houses held Type B1 figures and some of the worshippers at Gebel Zeit seem to have been Medjay. However, the physique is Egyptian,¹⁰⁵¹ since they lack the very broad hips characteristic of the female figurines found in C-Group burials or settlement sites.¹⁰⁵² While some scholars had proposed that the hairstyle of Type B2 figurines might be Nubian in origin, W.F. Albright pointed out that Second Millennium sites all over the ancient Near East and eastern Mediterranean likewise had these discoid headdresses,¹⁰⁵³ so there is no evidence indicating that Type B represented Nubians.

Similar to the Nubian theory, another of the former explanations on the use of Type B figurines stated that they were dancers. Bruyère had suggested that the Middle Kingdom female figurines might represent dancers, since the dance was a traditional preliminary to sexual intercourse and an important part of African fertility rites.¹⁰⁵⁴ However, as Pinch pointed out, the feet of Type B figurines are rather rudimentary.¹⁰⁵⁵ The frequent explanation for this feature is that practitioners would deliberately break the figurines to prevent the dancers leaving the tomb,¹⁰⁵⁶ similar to the same theory's proposed reason for the lack of feet of Type A2.¹⁰⁵⁷ Yet,

¹⁰⁵⁰ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 117-8; Desroches-Noblecourt, “‘Concubines du mort’,” 18.

¹⁰⁵¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 212.

¹⁰⁵² Ex: Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, fig. 44; Keimer, *Remarques*, 35-40, figs. 32-7.

¹⁰⁵³ W.F. Albright, “Astarte Plaques and Figurines from Tell Beit Mirsim,” *Mélanges Syriens offerts à Monsieur René Dussaud*, ed. R. Dussaud (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1939), 110-2.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 127.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 213.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 129-30.

¹⁰⁵⁷ See above in § 3.2.1.4.1.

not only is there is no definite evidence for the ritual breaking of votive offerings in Egypt,¹⁰⁵⁸ but many intact figurines occur in burials.¹⁰⁵⁹

Likewise, modern scholarship had rejected the theory that some or all of the figurines represented a “concubine” for a deceased man.¹⁰⁶⁰ The main weakness of the hypothesis is the occurrence of the figurines in female and child burials, temples, and domestic contexts. For New Kingdom figurines and the Wochenlaube ostraca, Hermann had supposed that the reclining woman reflected the theme of waiting for a lover found in love poetry.¹⁰⁶¹ However, the presence of children on these beds, as well as the contexts of these figurines makes this notion unlikely. Similarly, Keimer had assumed the Bes tattoos on some New Kingdom figurines marked prostitutes,¹⁰⁶² though no evidence supports this association during ancient Egyptian times.¹⁰⁶³ In a variation of the theory, Desroches-Noblecourt had attempted to link Middle Kingdom female figurines with a ritual to revive the virility of the male deceased,¹⁰⁶⁴ comparing the crosses on some Type A2 figurines with those shown on female mourners in a few New Kingdom tomb scenes.¹⁰⁶⁵ As stated above,¹⁰⁶⁶ the figurines do not closely resemble the women in those scenes. In addition, her theory does not explain those figurines with children.

Like Desroches-Noblecourt, W. Helck had believed that the figurines which held children had a different function from those without children.¹⁰⁶⁷ While he had viewed the former as

¹⁰⁵⁸ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, § 3.2.2.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Ex: Bruyère, *Rapport*, figs. 47, 50; Desroches-Noblecourt, “‘Concubines du mort’,” figs. 9-10; Hayes, *Scepter II*, fig. 6.

¹⁰⁶⁰ A. Widemann, “Varia XVIII,” *Sphinx* 18 (1915): 169-72; Kees, *Totenglauben*, 299-300; Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 9.

¹⁰⁶¹ A. Hermann, *Altägyptische Liebesdichtung* (Wiesbaden: O.Harrassowitz, 1959), 161.

¹⁰⁶² Keimer, *Remarques*, 99.

¹⁰⁶³ Pinch, “Childbirth and female figurines,” 412.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Desroches-Noblecourt, “‘Concubines du mort’,” 15-33.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Desroches-Noblecourt, “Concubines du mort’,” 25-33, figs. 11-2, pls. 2-3.

¹⁰⁶⁶ In § 3.2.1.4.1.

¹⁰⁶⁷ W. Helck, *Betrachtungen zur Grossen Göttin und den ihr verbundenen Göttheiten* (Munich, 1971), 62.

having associations with fertility, he had interpreted as charms to ensure sexual fulfillment for women, with no particular stress on conception.¹⁰⁶⁸ In this theory, these latter figures would have referred to a mother goddess, primarily Hathor.¹⁰⁶⁹ Operating under this assumption, Hornblower had argued that the Middle Kingdom figurines were the direct descendants of the female figurines found in some Predynastic burials,¹⁰⁷⁰ and that they portrayed Hathor in her dual aspect as bestower of fertility and protector of the dead.¹⁰⁷¹ While Helck had proposed that the figurines were survivals from a hypothetical 'matriarchal age' when women enjoyed greater social and sexual freedom, there is no evidence for this supposition. The divine mother theory also does properly explain the varied contexts in which the figurines occurred, particularly their presence in some male burials.¹⁰⁷² Likewise, the figurines do not closely resemble Hathor. The flowing hair characteristic of Hathor¹⁰⁷³ only occurs on hairstyles b and c of Type A2 figurines and some Type E and F figures. Instead, the hair appears to have reflected fashions in female hairstyles and jewelry.¹⁰⁷⁴

Instead, the figurines may have reflected a less direct connection. As Bruyère noted, figurines from Deir el-Medina could have identified women with a divine mother without representing a specific deity.¹⁰⁷⁵ Indeed, their frequency and care of deposition at the Hathor temple at Gebel Zeit could suggest divine status.¹⁰⁷⁶ Likewise, excavators found those from Amarna commonly in rooms with household altars, such as one cupboard with a *b3*-statue, a stela

¹⁰⁶⁸ Helck, *Betrachtungen*, 284; W. Helck, "Beischläferin," *LÄ* 1 (1975): 684-6.

¹⁰⁶⁹ G.D. Hornblower, "Predynastic Figurines of Women and their Successors," *JEA* 15 (1929): 40.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Ex: Hornblower, "Predynastic Figurines," pl. 8; P.J. Ucko, *Anthropomorphic Figurines of Predynastic Egypt and Neolithic Crete with Comparative Material from the Prehistoric Near East and Mainland Greece* (London: Andrew Szmidla, 1968).

¹⁰⁷¹ Hornblower, "Predynastic Figurines," 40-1.

¹⁰⁷² Pinch, *Votive*, 215.

¹⁰⁷³ G. Posener, "La légende de la tresse d'Hathor," in *Egyptological Studies in Honor of Richard A. Parker*, ed. L. Lesko (Hanover, New Hampshire, and London: 1986), 113.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Pinch, *Votive*, 216.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 125, 137-9.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Pinch, *Votive*, 216.

with a woman and boy worshipping Taweret, and two bed models.¹⁰⁷⁷ As discussed above,¹⁰⁷⁸ some Type A1 figurines had depictions of Taweret and Taweret appeared on the headboard of at least one Type F2 figurine.

A more recent theory involves the notion of the deliberate breakage of female figurines. Jacquet, Trapani, and Waraska had noted that most the figurines in their assemblages were broken,¹⁰⁷⁹ commonly at the middle, so Waraska supposed that this breakage was deliberate, despite the lack of tool marks. Trapani saw support for this theory from the context of the figurines, which were often landfill areas near settlements and cemeteries.¹⁰⁸⁰ Clay and mud, as materials, would be very suitable for use in execration and other destructive rituals, given the ease of modelling and subsequently destroying the material while unfired.¹⁰⁸¹ Given the known symbolism of the color red,¹⁰⁸² Waraska had posited that the female figurines were broken in a ritual akin to the “breaking of the red vessels” attested from the 6th Dynasty into the 18th Dynasty.¹⁰⁸³ Specifically, she considered the use of a “clay [figure] of Isis” *sin pw n 3st* in a New Kingdom snake spell (Figure 152)¹⁰⁸⁴ to be a reference to the female figurines.¹⁰⁸⁵ Another spell

¹⁰⁷⁷ CoA I, 24-5, pl. 12.

¹⁰⁷⁸ See §§ 3.2.1.1 and 3.2.6.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, (FIFAO 44; Cairo: IFAO, 2001), 61, n. 101; Waraska, “Female Figures,” 2; Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 70; Trapani, “A Deposit of Faience Figurines,” 460.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Trapani, “Statuette femminili,” 534.

¹⁰⁸¹ Raven, “Magical and symbolic aspects,” 240-1. See also M.J. Raven, “Wax in Egyptian Magic and Symbolism,” *OMRO* 64 (1983): 7-47.

¹⁰⁸² Ritner, *Mechanics*, 147-8 and 169-70, with extensive textual bibliography in notes 662-668 and 787. Add to this some more general discussions on the symbolism of the color red: Kees, “Farbensymbolik,” 413-479; G. Lefebvre, “Rouges et Nuances Voisines,” *JEA* 35 (1949): 72-76; E. Brunner-Traut, “Farbsymbolik,” *LÄ II*: 122-126; Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 556-560; Wilkinson, *Symbol and Magic*, 104-125; G. Pinch, “Red things: the symbolism of colour in magic,” in W.V. Davies (ed.), *Colour and painting in ancient Egypt* (London: British Museum Press, 2001), 182-185.

¹⁰⁸³ Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 106-12. For this ritual, see Jacobus van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe,” in *LÄ VI* (1986), 1389, 1391-6; Ritner, *Mechanics*, 144-153.

¹⁰⁸⁴ P. Turin 54003 rt. 13-16. Translations Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 91; Jürgen Osing, “Zu einigen magischen Texte,” *The Intellectual Heritage of Egypt: Studies Presented to László Kákossy by Friends and Colleagues on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*, ed. Ulrich Luft (Budapest: Chaire d'Égyptologie de l'Univ. Eötvös Lornd de Budapest, 1992), 473-480; Hans-Werner Fischer-Elfert, *Altägyptische Zaubersprüche* (Stuttgart; P. Reclam, 2005), 54, 140.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 131-148.

(Figure 153),¹⁰⁸⁶ specifically mentioning a figurine of Isis *rpyt nt sint* and *rpyt 3st*, used the figure for a spell treating a stomachache. Under this theory, Egyptians could have broken figurines via snapping at the midpoint, or, based on the breaking of the red pots' descriptions, placing the figurine on a hard surface and using a tool, or cracking across a person's knee.¹⁰⁸⁷

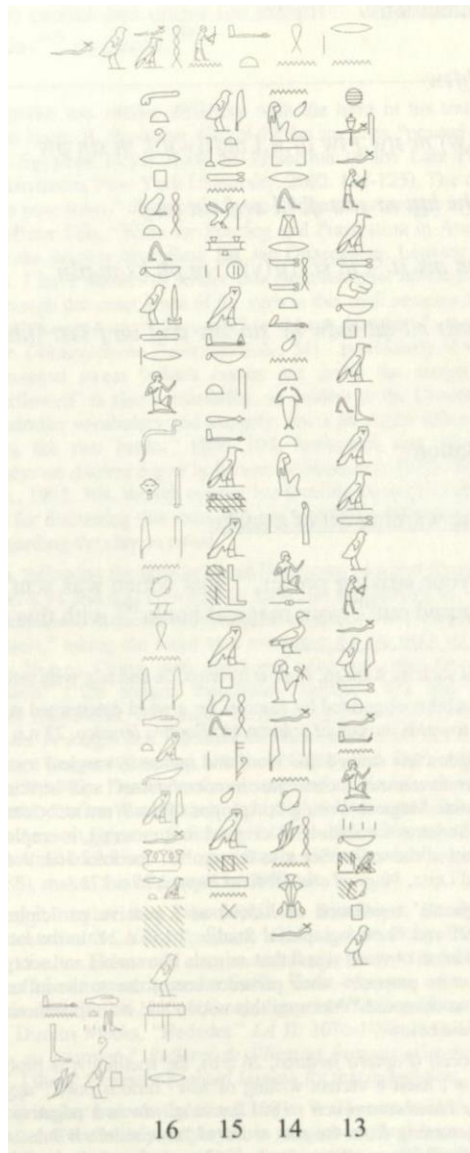


Figure 152 - Turin 54003, rt. 13-16. Image from Waraska, *Female Figurines*, fig. 11.

¹⁰⁸⁶ P. Leiden I 348 rt. 12, 2-12,4: Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 149-153; Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 4.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 70.

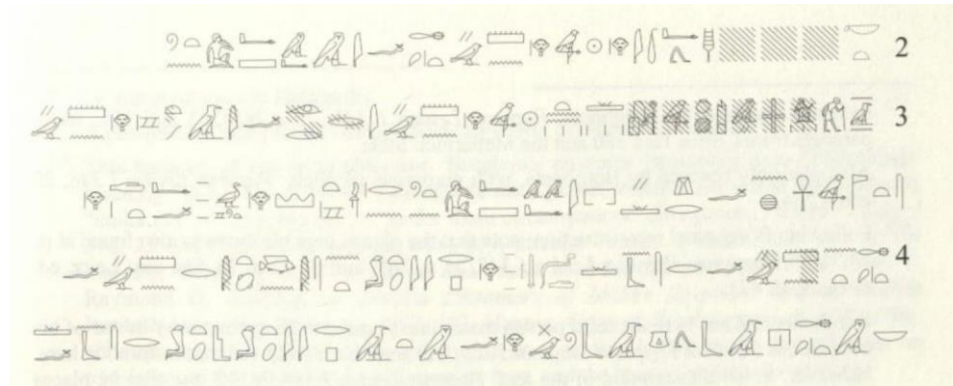


Figure 153 - Leiden I 348, rt. 12,2-4. Image from Waraska, *Female Figurines*, fig. 12.

The current evidence, however, does not support this usage. On the basis of Waraska's discussions breakage either with an instrument or barehanded across a person's knee, Szpakowska and Johnston tested these two methods versus accidental breakage of replicas of clay cobra figurines, another object type that scholars posit may have been deliberately broken.¹⁰⁸⁸ The results were fractures in sometimes unexpected ways and, with 'accidental' breakages, the same clean breaks one may expect of 'deliberate' destruction of clay figurines. Thus, one cannot currently tell if a fracture in a figurine was deliberate or not. Likewise, the two spells Waraska discussed specifically referenced clay figures of Isis, while none of the nude female figurines bore iconography of this deity. Furthermore, the theory of ritual breakage would not explain the presence of limestone figurines, which would be more difficult to break without a tool, as well as intact and non-red examples.¹⁰⁸⁹ The red paint, instead, likely represented blood, representing birth. Types D and F, which most closely parallel the birth iconography of the *Wochenlaube* and *lit clos*-altars, are notable for the number of figurines bearing red paint.

¹⁰⁸⁸ K. Szpakowska and R. Johnston, "Snake busters: experiments in fracture patterns of ritual figurines," *Mummies, Magic, and Medicine in Ancient Egypt*, ed. Price, Campbell, Roger Forshaw, Andrew Chamberlain, and Paul T. Nicholson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 461-475.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, 26-7.

The most widely accepted hypothesis for the function of nude female figurines is that they are related to birth, with any connection to a mother goddess being less direct.¹⁰⁹⁰ Several physical features link the figurines to birth and fertility. Certain jewelry shown on Middle Kingdom figurines, such as cowrie-shell girdles¹⁰⁹¹ likely had associations with the protection women's fertility and ability to rear children.¹⁰⁹² Pinch's proposal that the tattoos on the female figurines likely had similar protective function is sensible,¹⁰⁹³ especially with the Bes-tattoos on some Type F figurines. The physique of the figurines holding children and those without are the same.¹⁰⁹⁴ This practice is in keeping with the Egyptian reticence to depict pregnancy, as it did not conform to Egyptian ideals of youthful feminine beauty, best illustrated in depictions a tomb owner's wife and mother as essentially the same youthful figure.¹⁰⁹⁵ From a house in Deir el-Medina, an ancestor-like bust (Figure 154) labelled "Hathor, Mistress of the Vulva"¹⁰⁹⁶ appears to indicate a connection between Hathor and New Kingdom ancestor cults.¹⁰⁹⁷ For Type F figurines, Bruyère had plausibly identified the bed with the *mshnt* 'birth couch.'¹⁰⁹⁸

¹⁰⁹⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 216.

¹⁰⁹¹ See below, § 4.2.1.

¹⁰⁹² Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 217.

¹⁰⁹³ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 217.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 219; Castel et al., "Découverte de mines pharaoniques," 52.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 219.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Ägyptisches Museum Berlin, *Ägyptisches Museum Berlin* (Berlin: Staatlichen Museen, 1967), Cat. 783 (Inv. 20994).

¹⁰⁹⁷ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 219.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 137-9. 142-3.



Figure 154 – Bust from Deir el-Medina labelled “Hathor, Mistress of the Vulva.” Image from Ägyptisches Museum Berlin, *Ägyptisches Museum Berlin*, Cat. 783.






While the figurines held a similar general purpose and featured gradual development over time (Table 14),¹⁰⁹⁹ the different types appeared to have differing specializations. Type A overwhelmingly came from tomb contexts in the Theban region and centers of the royal cult. As Pinch noted,¹¹⁰⁰ some of these occurred in the outer, votive areas of the tomb. Nevertheless, the presence of definite birth objects such as the wands¹¹⁰¹ indicates that birth-related material can have subsequent use for an analogous birth to the afterlife. In contrast, Type B, over a third of Type E, and about half of Type G served as temple votives, particularly for Hathor. Type C, D, E, F, about half of G, and plaque figurines belonged in domestic areas. The figurines also differed in terms of regional specialization. Types B, C, and G were either overwhelmingly or exclusively from Upper Egyptian contexts, while Types E, F, and plaque figurines appeared more widespread. Type D appeared to have been a particularly narrow version, occurring almost exclusively in Amarna and Deir el-Medina. For the New Kingdom, there was also the notable distinction between the more centralized, mold-made figurines of Types C-F and the handmade Type G and plaque figurines. The latter two appeared much more local, with the decoration and shape of plaque figurines being regionally and chronologically specific.


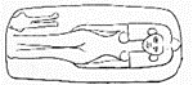

¹⁰⁹⁹ Only excavated figurines with firm dating included, with lines corresponding to number of objects.

¹¹⁰⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 218.

¹¹⁰¹ See below, § 6.3.1.

Table 14 – Chronological Distribution of Female Figurines

Date					
L.OK/FIP	—				
E.MK	—				
MK	—	—	—		
L.MK		—	—		
SIP		—	—		
E.18D.		—	—	—	—
18D.			—	—	—
L.18D.				—	—
18-19D.				—	—
19D.					
19-20D.					—
L.NK-TIP				—	

Date				
L.OK/FIP				
E.MK				
MK				
L.MK				
SIP				
E.18D.				
18D.				
L.18D.				
18-19D.				
19D.				
19-20D.				
L.NK-TIP				

3.3 Bed Models

Previous scholarship has generally assumed a close association between bed models and female figurines of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period. However, more recent evidence suggests that the models could have had a meaning independent of the figurines. There are two main types of bed models: simply modeled with paint sometimes applied, and beds with molded decoration. For our period of study, both types predominantly originated from town

sites. Most New Kingdom bed models (Table 15) came from Amarna and Deir el-Medina, with some from Drab Abu Neggah, the Ramesseum, Sawama, and Qurneh, indicating an overwhelmingly Theban distribution.

Table 15 – New Kingdom Bed Models

Site	Context	Location	Date	Description	Bibliography
Amarna	Town	estate P 47.01-03	1.18D.	Leg of bed model; lion paw; traces of red and black paint	Berlin ÄM 28749: Rattmann, “Zwei Fußfragmente eines Bettmodells,” 372 (Kat.-Nr. 154).
Amarna	Town	estate P 47.01-03	1.18D.	Leg of bed model; lion paw; traces of red and black paint	Berlin ÄM 28750: Rattmann, “Zwei Fußfragmente eines Bettmodells,” 372 (Kat.-Nr. 154).
Amarna	Town	MC	1.18D.	3 model beds	Stevens, <i>Private religion</i> , 88 (11.631, 11/12.312, 12/13.1422).
Amarna	Town	MC, N.49.21	1.18D.	2 model beds of pottery with white slip and red stripes	CoA I, 25, pl. 12.5 (21/425-426).
Amarna	Town	MC, P. 46.9	1.18D.	Model clay bed	CoA I, 31.
Amarna	Town	MC, Q46.38	1.18D.	Model clay bed	Stevens, <i>Private religion</i> , 88 (23/120).
Amarna	Town	N 50.23	1.18D.	Fragment	Borchardt and Rieke, <i>Wohnhäuser</i> , 312 (11/12.1532).
Amarna	Town	NS, T. 36.67	1.18D.	Corner fragment, painted red; perhaps end-board	CoA II, 62.
Amarna	Town	O 48.1	1.18D.	Model clay bed	Borchardt and Rieke, <i>Wohnhäuser</i> , 195 (11/12.213).
Amarna	Town	O 48.9	1.18D.	Model clay bed	Borchardt and Rieke, <i>Wohnhäuser</i> , 206 (11/12.976).
Amarna	Town	O 49.12	1.18D.	Model clay bed	Borchardt and Rieke, <i>Wohnhäuser</i> , 251 (11/12.429).
Amarna	Town	P 47.24	1.18D.	Model clay bed	Borchardt and Rieke, <i>Wohnhäuser</i> , 137 (13/14.660).
Amarna	Town	P 47.8	1.18D.	Model clay bed	Borchardt and Rieke, <i>Wohnhäuser</i> , 110 (12/13.1606).

Amarna	Town	P 48.2	1.18D.	Model clay bed	Borchardt and Ricke, <i>Wohnhäuser</i> , 220 (12/13.7, 45).
Amarna	Town	P 49.9	1.18D.	Bed model with pillow	Borchardt and Ricke, <i>Wohnhäuser</i> , 271 (11/12.939).
Amarna	Town	Q 47.21	1.18D.	Painted model clay bed	Borchardt and Ricke, <i>Wohnhäuser</i> , 164 (12/13.1143).
Amarna	Town	Q 47.7	1.18D.	Model clay bed	Borchardt and Ricke, <i>Wohnhäuser</i> , 152 (12/13.338).
Amarna	Town	R. 42.6	1.18D.	33/182 Model of bed in pottery, 6 cm long	CoA III, 121.
Amarna	Town	T 35.9	1.18D.	red wicker pattern with circles and dots in black and yellow paint; rounded foot(?) -board with yellow petals(?) and rough figure of Bes (?) (Bandy legs and headdress) in yellow outlined in black next to similar <i>hpr</i> -beetle	CoA II, 42 (29/392). UC46891.
Amarna	Town	WV, Long Wall St., no. 10, staircase	1.18D.	"fragment of clay model bed"	CoA I, 85.
Amarna	Town	WV, East St., no. 10, Kitchen	1.18D.	Wood leg of model chair or bed, 22/4	CoA I, 71.
Amarna	Town	WV, North Passage, maybe at niche	1.18D.	Clay model bed; footboard preserved, lattice painted frame	CoA I, 67, no. 22/72, pl. 23/5.
Amarna	Town	WV, North Passage, maybe at niche	1.18D.	Fragments of clay model bed 22/90	CoA I, 67.
Deir el-Medina	Tomb	Tomb 335, shaft 1099	NK	Fragments of two small terracotta beds, the checkered top in white	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 5, 13. Prov. 6097: Trapani, "Statuette femminili," 538.
Deir el-Medina	Tomb	Tomb no. 1352	1.18D.	Fragments of three small beds in painted terracotta	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 1933-1934, 97.
Deir el-Medina	Town		NK	Painted in white with a caning represented by red bands	Valbelle and Bonnet, "Le village" (1976), 341.
Ramesseum	Tomb	STI.Sa05/pu01	e.18D.	White background, big blue dots, while on the reverse of the footrest a few brown lines on a white background are framed in blue	Nelson, "La tombe d'une nourrice," 125-6, pl. XXIA-B.

Ramesseum	Tomb	STI.Sa05/pu01	e.18D.	The lines of the box spring stand out in blue on a red background with yellow and blue spots.	Nelson, "La tombe d'une nourrice," 125, pl. XXA-B.
Sawama	Tomb	Tomb S. 15	18D.	Plain, part of pillow preserved	Bourriau and Millard, "Sawâma," 22-24, fig. 1.
Qurneh	Tomb	Tomb N	18D.	Plain, pillow preserved	Petrie, <i>Qurneh</i> , 12, pl. XXXI.5.

Type 1 beds ranged from simple rectangular shapes with footboards to those that include a pillow.¹¹⁰² Interestingly, there are at least three Middle Kingdom instances of bed models found in tombs with female figurines of A2d, B1 (Figure 155), and plaque types (Figure 156).¹¹⁰³ A number of the New Kingdom bed models had painted decoration of dots or crossed lattice pattern (Figure 157). A couple of bed-leg fragments from Amarna showed a lion-paw design,¹¹⁰⁴ likely referencing the type of high-status beds seen in reliefs of this period, such as the royal birth scenes.¹¹⁰⁵ One so far unique bed model from Amarna depicts on the footboard a rough figure of Bes with headdress in yellow outlined in black next to similar *hpr*-beetle (Figure 158).¹¹⁰⁶ The closest parallel is an unprovenanced Type F1 figurine, where the headboard depicted Taweret with a probable Bes-figure and the footboard had a woman holding a mirror and another object.¹¹⁰⁷ Of the thirty-six known New Kingdom Type 1 bed models with context, excavators

¹¹⁰² For latter, see for ex. Petrie, *Qurneh*, 12, pl. XXXI.5; Borchardt and Ricke, *Wohnhäuser*, 271 (11/12.939); Bourriau and Millard, "Sawâma," 22-24, pl. 17.

¹¹⁰³ For former two, see Michalowski et al., *Edfu 1938*, 121, pl. XL.4 and 6. For latter, see Petrie, *Labyrinth*, 36, pl. XXX.

¹¹⁰⁴ A. Rattmann, "Zwei Fußfragmente eines Bettmodells," in *Im Licht von Amarna. 100 Jahre Fund der Nofretete*, ed. F. Seyfried (Petersberg: Imhof, 2012), 372 (Kat.-Nr. 154).

¹¹⁰⁵ See below, § 7.3.2.

¹¹⁰⁶ UC46891: CoA II, 42 (29/392).

¹¹⁰⁷ D'Auria et al., *Mummies and Magic*, 137, Cat. 74 (MFA 72.739).

found only nine with female figurines.¹¹⁰⁸ These figurines ranged from Type C (Figures 159-160),¹¹⁰⁹ D (Figure 161),¹¹¹⁰ and E (Figure 162).¹¹¹¹

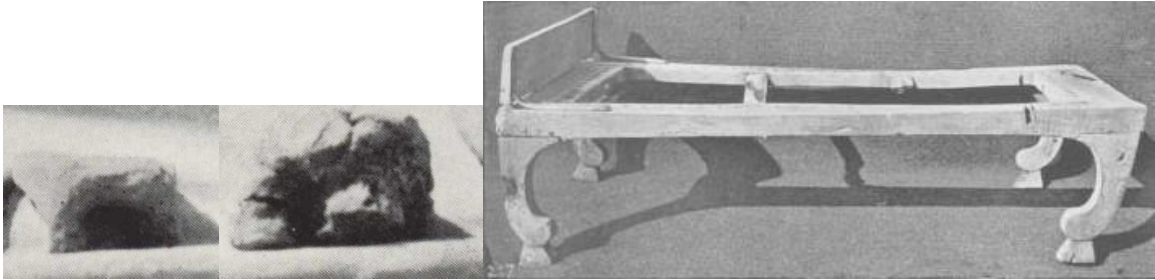


Figure 155 (left) – Edfu bed models found with figurines, MK. Image from Michalowski et al., *Edfu 1938*, pl. XL.4 and 6.

Figure 156 (right) – Hawara bed model found with figurine, MK. Image from Petrie, *Labyrinth*, pl. XXX.



Figure 157 (left) – Bed model with lattice decoration. Image from Bruyere, *Rapport 16*, fig 57.

Figure 158 (right) – Bed model from Amarna with Bes-figure and *hpr*-beetle. Image courtesy of the Petrie Museum online catalogue (accessed 4/12/2019).

¹¹⁰⁸ Amarna (*CoA* I, 25, pl. 12.5 (21/425-426); Borchardt and Ricke, *Wohnhäuser*, 195 (11/12.213), 206 (11/12.976), 220 (12/13.7, 45)); Deir el-Medina (Bruyere, *Rapport 16*, 97); Ramesseum (Nelson, "La tombe d'une nourrice," 125-6, pl. XX-XXI); Sawama (Bourriau and Millard, "Sawâma," 22-24, fig. 1); Qurneh (Petrie, *Qurneh*, 12, pl. XXXI.5).

¹¹⁰⁹ Ex: Petrie, *Qurneh*, pl. XXXI.5; Bourriau and Millard, "Sawama," fig. 1; Nelson, "La tombe d'une nourrice," pl. XXIA.

¹¹¹⁰ Ex: *CoA* I, 25, 67 (no. 22/72), pls. 12.5 and 23.5; Freed et al., *Pharaohs of the Sun*, Cat. 178.

¹¹¹¹ Ex: *CoA* I, 67 (no. 22/72), pl. 23.5; Bourriau and Millard, "Sawama," fig. 1.

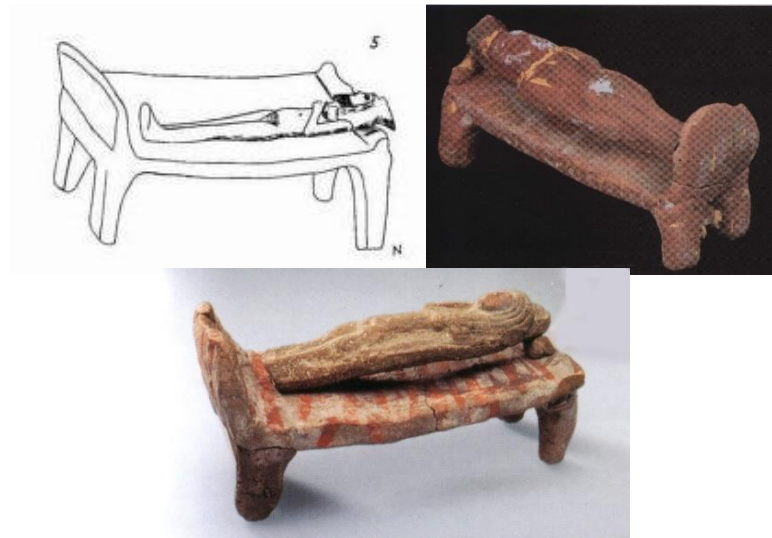


Figure 159 (top left) – Bed model with Type C1 figurine, from Qurneh. Image from Petrie, *Qurneh*, pl.XXXI.5.

Figure 160 (top right) – Bed model with Type C2 figurine, from Ramesseum. Image from Nelson, "La tombe d'une nourrice," pl. XXIA.

Figure 161 (bottom) – Bed model with Type D figurine, from Amarna. Image from Freed et al., *Pharaohs of the Sun*, Cat. 178.



Figure 162 – Bed model and associated finds, Sawama S.15. Image from Bourriau and Millard, “Sawama,” fig. 1.

Type 2 beds (Figure 164), like the earlier models, originated predominantly from the Theban region and in domestic areas.¹¹¹² The molded beds date from the late New Kingdom through the Third Intermediate Period, with only one example, found with a female figurine

¹¹¹² Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, 166-7; Del Vesco, *Letti Votivi*, 47-67, and notes therein both.

plaque, firmly dated to the late New Kingdom (Figure 163).¹¹¹³ A few other bed models may also date to the late New Kingdom, though their dating is less certain.¹¹¹⁴

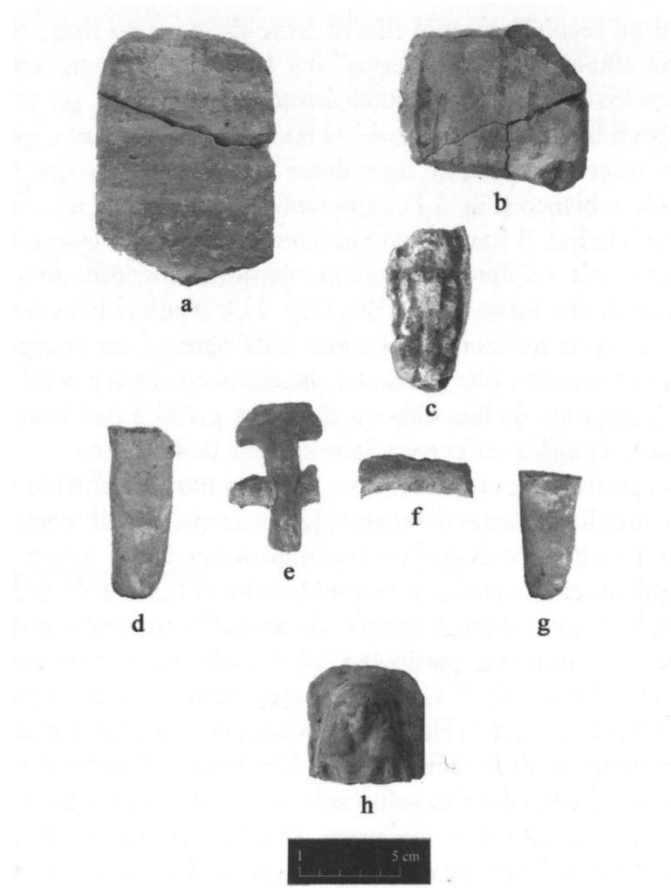


Figure 163 – Fragments of molded bed model and associated female figure plaque. Image from Del Vesco, “Fra I cespugli di papiro,” 2007, fig. 2.

¹¹¹³ P. Del Vesco, “Fra I cespugli di papiro: il sSS wAD e I letti votivi,” in *La terra, gli uomini e gli dèi: il paesaggio agricolo nell’Antico Egitto: atti dei Secondo Colloquio, Bologna, 22/23 maggio 2006*, ed. S. Pernigotti and M. Zecchi (Imola [Bologna]: La mandragora, 2007), fig. 2.

¹¹¹⁴ M. Baraize, “Compte rendu tes travaux executes a Deir el-Medineh,” *ASAE* 13 (1914): 41; M. Abder-Raziq, “Funde aus Abu el-Gud (Karnak),” *ASAE* 70 (1984-5): 9; Del Vesco, *Letti Votivi*, 55-56, 66.



Figure 164 – Molded bed model from Medinet Habu, TIP. Image from Del Vesco, “Fra I cespugli di papiro,” fig. 5 (Cairo JE 30124).

The decoration of the molded beds bore similarities to that of other objects. In the New Kingdom, actual beds and those from *Wochenlaube* scenes similarly bore the image of Bes, particularly on the legs.¹¹¹⁵ As discussed above, convolvulus appeared regularly on *Wochenlaube* ostraca and the domestic altars at Deir el-Medina. In both funerary and temple scenes, the convolvulus and papyrus occurred as gifts to the deceased or to a deity, the latter usually Anukis, the triad of Elephantine, and Hathor, as well as Taweret, Amun, Ptah *nb mꜣꜥt*, and the processional boats of Mut and Khonsu.¹¹¹⁶ In other cases where Egyptians represented convolvulus as the sole plant type, the vine appeared, almost exclusively, in association with women.¹¹¹⁷ The sarcophagi lids of some women (Figure 165), dating from the 19th-21st

¹¹¹⁵ See §§ 2.2.2 and 7.4.1.

¹¹¹⁶ Del Vesco, *Letti Votivi*, 146-7; A. Lopez-Moncet, “Representations vegetales enigmatiques du Nouvel Empire. La “liane” a feuilles sagittes,” in *Encyclopedie religieuse de l’Univers vegetal. Croyances phytoreligieuses de l’Egypte ancienne*, Vol. II, ed. S.H. Aufrère (Montpellier: Université Paul Valéry Montpellier, 2001), 46-48.

¹¹¹⁷ Del Vesco, *Letti Votivi*, 146-7.

Dynasties, depicted the women holding convolvulus.¹¹¹⁸ Likewise, Theban tomb walls (TT 31, TT 45, TT 277, TT 296) depicted the wives of the deceased, who often held the title “Chantress of Amun,” holding convolvulus and papyrus along with the sistrum and *mnṯ*-necklace.¹¹¹⁹ It was the main element of the funerary kiosk of Meketaten, who may have died in childbirth.¹¹²⁰ Tomb reliefs of dancers likewise depicted convolvulus vines (Figure 166).¹¹²¹ A close parallel to the nude female figure on a papyrus boat comes from New Kingdom faience bowls, which sometimes depicted convolvulus as well as papyrus plants.¹¹²²



Figure 165 – Coffin of woman holding convolvulus, Cairo JE 27309. Image from Saleh and Sourouzian, *Egyptian Museum*, Cat. 218.

¹¹¹⁸ Saleh and Sourouzian, *The Egyptian Museum*, Cat. 218; Lopez-Moncet, “Representations vegetales enigmatiques,” 54; Miller, “Was Convolvulus Erotic,” 255.

¹¹¹⁹ Lopez Moncet, “Representations vegetales enigmatiques,” 52-53.

¹¹²⁰ G.T. Martin, *The Royal Tomb at El-Amarna*, II (London: EES, 1989), 46-8, fig. 11, pls. 68-69; Lopez Moncet, “Representations vegetales enigmatiques,” 49.

¹¹²¹ Ex: Brunner-Traut, *Altägyptische Scherbenbilder*, Abb. 20; E. Walters, “Women in the Cult of Isis at Hierakonopolis,” in *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists Cairo, 2000*, V. 2, ed. Z. Hawass (Cairo; New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2003), 558, Fig. 1.

¹¹²² Ex: Petrie, *IKG*, plate XX, n.6.



Figure 166 – Scene of dancers, Tomb of Hormose at Hierakonopolis. Image from Walters, “Women in the Cult of Isis,” Fig. 1.

The marshy scenes depicted on the molded bed have their closest parallel in scenes depicting a ritual associated with Hathor.¹¹²³ A number of Old Kingdom and First Intermediate reliefs from the tombs of high elites depicted the deceased and the family in the marsh on papyrus boats (Figure 167), with the caption reading *sšš w3ḏ n ḥwt-ḥr* “*sšš* of the papyrus to/for Hathor.”¹¹²⁴ The scene, without the caption, occurred sporadically in tombs of later periods.¹¹²⁵ Similar scenes occurred in six reliefs from the temples of Karnak, Luxor, Hibis and Korn Ombo, dating from the New Kingdom and Late Period.¹¹²⁶ Previous scholarship had various interpretations of the term *sšš*.¹¹²⁷ Theories ranged from intertwining the stems to form an arched

¹¹²³ W. Wettengel, “Zu den Darstellungen des Papyrusraschelns,” *SAK* 19 (1992): 328, 333; P. Del Vesco, “Fra I cespugli di papiro: il *sšš w3ḏ* e I letti votivi,” in *La terra, gli uomini e gli dei: il paesaggio agricolo nell'Antico Egitto: atti del secondo Colloquio*, Bologna, 22/23 maggio 2006, ed. S. Perigotti and M. Zecchi (Bologna: La mandragora, 2007), 59-72; Teeter, *Baked clay figurines*, 161

¹¹²⁴ D. Dunham and W.K. Simpson, *The Mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III. G 7530 -7540* (Giza Mastabas 1; Boston: MFA, 1974), fig. 4; W.K. Simpson, *Mastabas of the Western Cemetery: Part I. Sekhemka (G 1029); Tjetu 1 (G 2001); Iasen (G 2196); Penmeru (G 2197); Hagy, Nefertjentet, and Herunefer (G 2352/53); Djaty, Tjetu 11, and Nimesti (G 2337 X, 2343, 2366)* (Giza Mastabas 4; Boston: MFA, 1980), Fig. 30; N. de G. Davies, *The rock tombs of Deir el Gebrawi II* (London: EEF, 1902), table XVII; Del Vesco, “Fra I cespugli di papiro,” 67, figs. 8-10.

¹¹²⁵ A. Piankoff, “Les Peintures dans la Tombea du roi Aï,” *MDAIK* 16 (1958): 247-248, tav. XXI-2; J. Berlandini, “Monuments de la chapelle funéraire du gouverneur Ptahmes,” *BIFAO* 82 (1982): 9-11; J. Dittmar, *Blumen und Blumensträuße als Opfergabe im alten Ägypten* (MÄS 43; München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1986), 152.

¹¹²⁶ Dittmar, *Blumen und Blumensträuße*, 153; P. Munro, *Der Unas-Friedhof North-West I* (Mainz am Rhein: P. von Zabern, 1993), 132-133; Wettengel, “Zu den Darstellungen des Papyrusraschelns,” 337, fig. 3; W. Wettengel and E. Winter, “Der Text der Kam Ombo-Szene van der Fahrt im Papyrusdickicht,” in *Religion und Philosophie im alten Ägypten*, ed. U. Verhoeven and E. Graefe (OLA 39; Leuven: Peeters, 1991), 363-374, fig. 4; Del Vesco, “Fra I cespugli di papiro,” 70, figs. 12-13.

¹¹²⁷ See for summary of interpretations and discussion in Munro, *Der Unas-Friedhof North-West I*, 95-118, 126-136.

gateway for the goddess,¹¹²⁸ shaking papyrus to produce a soothing sound akin to that of the sistrum (*sššt*),¹¹²⁹ or an actual pilgrimage to the marshes in honor of Hathor.¹¹³⁰ As noted by Manniche,¹¹³¹ marsh scenes in tombs tended to hold erotic and regenerative associations. The context of the *sšš wꜥꜣ* scenes indicate a relation to fertility, fecundity, and renewal.¹¹³²

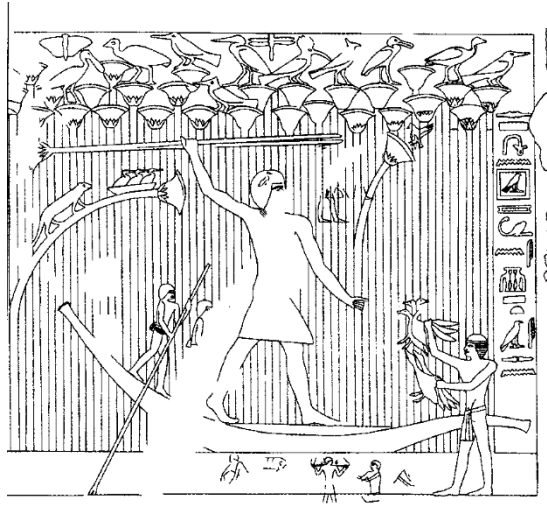


Figure 167 – Illustration of *sšš wꜥꜣ* tomb scene. Image from Del Vesco “Fra I cespugli di papiro,” fig. 9.

The motif of the fertility-bed, part of the core birth iconography of the New Kingdom, had its origins in the Middle Kingdom. In cases where excavators found bed models with female figurines, the former had associations with a variety of types, implying a common general meaning among the figurines. Most bed models, however, were not found with a female figurine. As an independent object, the decoration, particularly with the figure of Bes, indicates a fertility

¹¹²⁸ P. Montet, "Hathor et les papyrus," *Kemi* XIV (1957): 108.

¹¹²⁹ Vandier, *Manuel* IV, 741.

¹¹³⁰ Y.M. Harpur, "Zšš Wꜥꜣ scenes of the Old Kingdom," *GM* 38 (1980): 58; Dittmar, *Blumen und Blumensträuße*, 156.

¹¹³¹ L. Manniche, "The so-called scenes of daily life in the private tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty: an overview," in *The Theban Necropolis. Past, Present and Future*, ed. N. Strudwick and J. H. Taylor (London: British Museum Press, 2003), 42-45.

¹¹³² Del Vesco, "Fra I cespugli di papiro," 70-1; *Ibid.*, *Letti Votivi*, 157-8.

function. Those found in temples likely had a votive function, while models from tombs probably served a parallel role in aiding in rebirth.

In contrast to the more widespread female figurines, bed models appeared as a more Theban-specific object type, similar to contemporary figured pebbles. With the two general types of model beds, these objects appeared rather standardized, in contrast to the more free-form pebbles. While bed models appeared primarily in town contexts, the pebbles occurred more often as votive items.

3.4 Jeux de la Nature

Semi-related to the nude female figurines are votive pebbles, which Egyptians selected for their resemblance to certain motifs, such as sun disks, women, and animals. Egyptians further enhanced these features with black, brown, and yellow paint.¹¹³³ This object type predominately dates to the New Kingdom, particularly the Ramesside Period,¹¹³⁴ though there are Old Kingdom and older precedents. In contrast to earlier periods, New Kingdom pebbles were specifically associated with Hathor. Pebbles appeared to have been votive, often from temples and shrines. Indeed, those from Deir el-Medina likely were dedicated in community or household shrines.¹¹³⁵ These artifacts appear to have been a Theban type, with those from Timna and Mirgissa likely imported by the miners and soldiers assigned to these peripheral areas. Also relevant are nine flints from a cache at Karnak temple dating between the New Kingdom and Ptolemaic Period.¹¹³⁶

¹¹³³ C. Graves-Brown, "Ideological significance of flint in Dynastic Egypt" (Ph.D. diss. University College London, 2011), 181.

¹¹³⁴ L. Keimer, "*Jeux de la nature*" *retouchés par la main de l'homme provenant de Deir el-Medineh (Thèbes) et remontant au Nouvel Empire* (EE Fasc. II; Le Caire, 1940), 1-21; Karlin, "Sanctuaire d'Hathor," 329; B. Rothenberg, *The Egyptian mining temple at Timna* (London: University College London, 1988), 266, pl. 155; N. Reeves, "Decorated pebbles from a Ramessid workmen's shelter," *The Valley of the King's Foundation Bulletin* 2 (2003): 2.

¹¹³⁵ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 276-7; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 220; Graves-Brown, "Ideological significance of flint," 182.

¹¹³⁶ Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale website (Accessed 9/1/2019): ifao.egnet.net/bases/cachette/, CK892, CK1023-1029, and CK1199.

Parallels to the New Kingdom pebbles derived from the Predynastic, Early Dynastic, and late Old Kingdom. Excavators found a deposit of natural flints, some of which had a snake-like appearance, near the predynastic settlement of Mahasna.¹¹³⁷ Predynastic tombs at Abusir el-Meleq and Tarkhan had humanoid-shaped nodules.¹¹³⁸ Presumably dedicated to Khenti-amentiu,¹¹³⁹ flints from Abydos, dating to the 1st Dynasty, resembled apes.¹¹⁴⁰ In the courtyard of the temple of Satet at Aswan, Late Old Kingdom pebbles had mainly phallic shapes, though some resemble pregnant women or nursing mothers.¹¹⁴¹



Figure 168 – Pebbles from Timna shaped like women. Image from Rothenberg, *Timna*, pl. 155.1-3.

¹¹³⁷ J. Garstang, *Maḥâsna and Bêt Khallâf* (ERA 7; London: Quaritch, 1903), 7, pl. 5

¹¹³⁸ Respectively, Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, 2-4; W.M.F. Petrie, *Tarkhan II* (ERA 26; London: BSAE, 1914), 9, pl. 1.

¹¹³⁹ C. Graves-Brown, "Emergent flints," in *Through a glass darkly: magic, dreams & prophecy in ancient Egypt*, ed. K. Szpakowska (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2006), 50.

¹¹⁴⁰ W.M.F. Petrie, *Abydos II* (MEEF 24; London: EEF, 1903), pl. 9, nos. 190-4, 196; Kemp, *Ancient Egypt. Anatomy of a civilization*, 73, fig. 24.9.

¹¹⁴¹ G. Dreyer, *Elephantine VIII, Der Tempel der Satet, der Fund der Frühzeit und des Alten Reiches* (Mainz: P. von Zabern, 1986), 153, pl. 57.

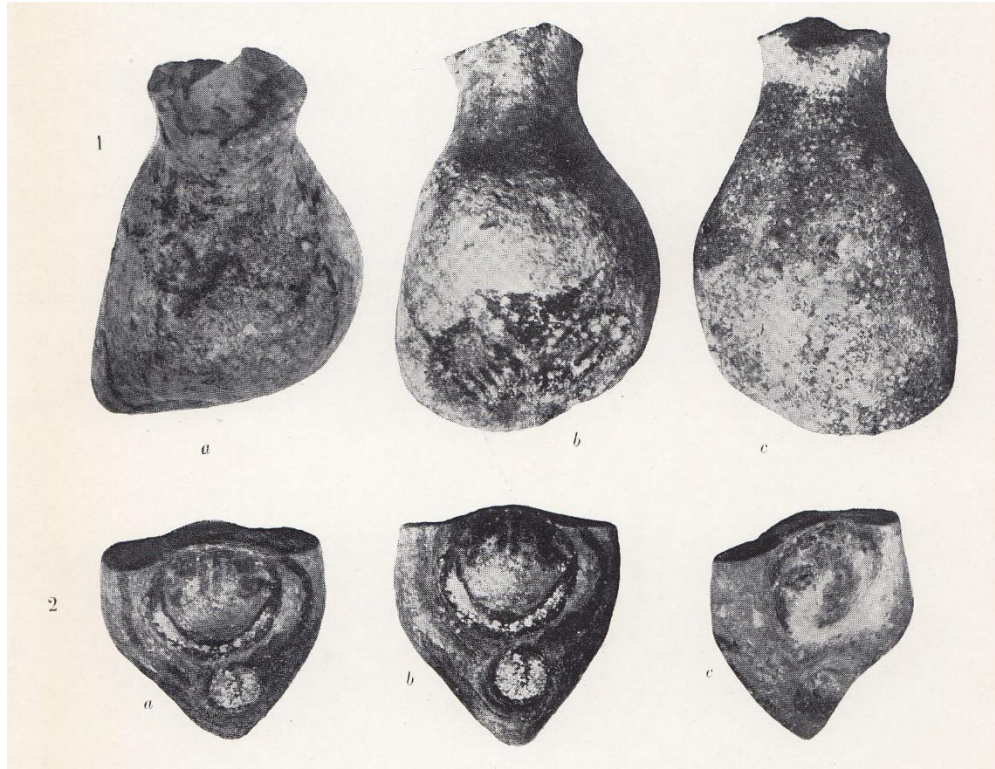


Figure 169 – Pebbles from Deir el-Medina shaped like women. Image from Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, pl. 6.

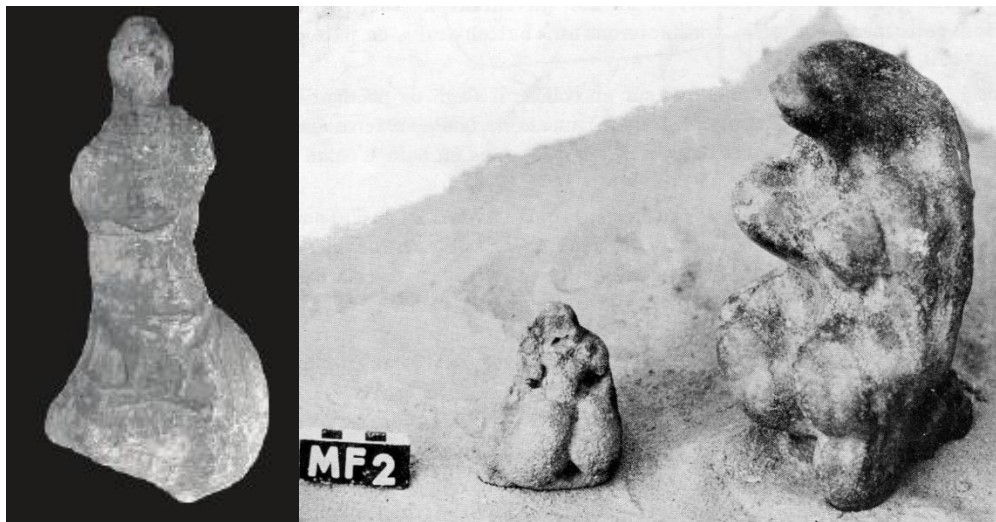


Figure 170 (left) – Woman-shaped pebble from Valley of the Kings. Image from Reeves, "Decorated pebbles," fig. 1.

Figure 171 (right) – Woman-shaped pebbles from Mirgissa. Image from Karlin, "Sanctuaire," fig. 27.1.

A significant portion of the flint pebbles had shapes related to themes of fertility. The most common, found in Timna (Figure 168), Mirgissa (Figure 171), and Deir el-Medina (Figure

169), was the steatopygous or pregnant woman,¹¹⁴² which sometimes had paint to highlight the breasts and pubic area. Some of the Deir el-Medina flints appear to show a smaller pebble emerging from them, thus ‘giving birth.’¹¹⁴³ Interestingly, Rothenberg described some of these pebbles as woman-and-child figures.¹¹⁴⁴ In Deir el-Medina, a variant of this type are women wearing a broad collar and lotus blossom on the head, with large stomachs and a lotus flower painted to represent the genitals.¹¹⁴⁵ Another variation, from a workmen’s shelter in Valley of the Kings, is a kneeling woman with black paint (Figure 170).¹¹⁴⁶ From Mirgissa, the concept of feminine fertility also occurred with a pebble in the shape of breasts.¹¹⁴⁷ One of the Karnak cache flints, with wider hips and black-painted hair falling to the shoulders, appears to be another female.¹¹⁴⁸ A couple of other have humanoid shapes.¹¹⁴⁹ Another common type from Hathor shrines at Mirgissa (Figure 173) and Timna (Figure 172), are phalluses, either regular¹¹⁵⁰ or with glands.¹¹⁵¹

Sun disks, either between cow horns (Figure 174)¹¹⁵² or as part of the horizon sign (Figure 175),¹¹⁵³ were another frequent shape. At least some of these may have been instead a crescent moon with lunar disk. Excavators described several flints from Karnak as “en forme de disque lunaire,”¹¹⁵⁴ though one has a falcon-head, presumably Horus, emerging from the disk,

¹¹⁴² Respectively, Rothenberg, *Timna*, 266, pl. 155.1-3; Karlin, “Sanctuaire d’Hathor,” 329, figs. 27, 28.2-3; Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, pls. V-VI.

¹¹⁴³ Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, pl. 6.2a-c; Graves-Brown, “Emergent flint,” 53-4.

¹¹⁴⁴ Rothenberg, *Timna*, 266.

¹¹⁴⁵ Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, pl. VII; Backhouse, “Female figurines,” 26.

¹¹⁴⁶ Reeves, “Decorated pebbles,” fig. 1.

¹¹⁴⁷ Karlin, “Sanctuaire d’Hathor,” fig. 28.1 (first from the right).

¹¹⁴⁸ CK1025.

¹¹⁴⁹ CK1023-4.

¹¹⁵⁰ Karlin, “Sanctuaire d’Hathor,” fig. 28.1 (first and second from left); Rothenberg, *Timna*, 266, pl. 155.4-8.

¹¹⁵¹ Karlin, “Sanctuaire d’Hathor,” fig. 28.1 (third from left); Rothenberg, *Timna*, 266, pl. 155.9.

¹¹⁵² Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, 15-16, fig. 14.

¹¹⁵³ Reeves, “Decorated pebbles,” fig. 2.

¹¹⁵⁴ CK1026-1029, CK1199.

making it more likely a solar disk between horns.¹¹⁵⁵ Another significant shape are scarabs (Figure 176), with two winged examples from Deir el-Medina¹¹⁵⁶ and a yellow flint scarab from a foundation deposit of Thutmose III at Koptos.¹¹⁵⁷ From Deir el-Medina, other shapes include two males,¹¹⁵⁸ a horse/dog,¹¹⁵⁹ a bird,¹¹⁶⁰ a hippopotamus identified via inscription as Seth,¹¹⁶¹ a Sobek crocodile with blue lotus blossom (Figure 177),¹¹⁶² and a snake.¹¹⁶³ From Deir el-Bahari, Werbrouck found a New Kingdom flint nodule shaped to resemble the head of a cobra.¹¹⁶⁴

¹¹⁵⁵ CK1026.

¹¹⁵⁶ Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, 16, figs. 16-17.

¹¹⁵⁷ B. Adams, "Petrie's manuscript notes on the Koptos foundation deposits of Tuthmosis III," *JEA* 61 (1975): 105, possibly now in the Ashmolean (EE669).

¹¹⁵⁸ Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, figs. 1-2.

¹¹⁵⁹ Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, fig. 7.

¹¹⁶⁰ Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, 12, fig. 9.

¹¹⁶¹ Bruyère, *Rapport* 10, 69-70, fig. 50; Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, 11.

¹¹⁶² Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, fig. 11.

¹¹⁶³ Bruyère, *Rapport* 7, 60, fig. 25; Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, 15, pl. 9.

¹¹⁶⁴ M. Werbrouck, "A Propos de Lusus Naturae," *CdE* 47 (1949): 95.

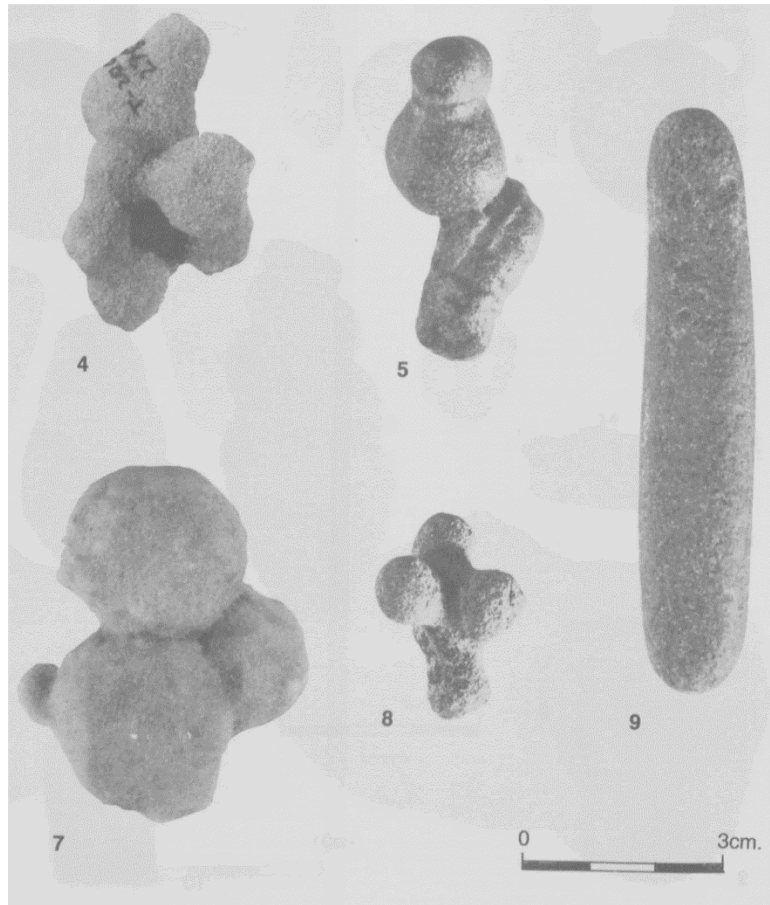


Figure 172 – Phallus-shaped pebbles from Timna. Image from Rothenberg, *Timna*, pl. 155.4-5 and 7-9.

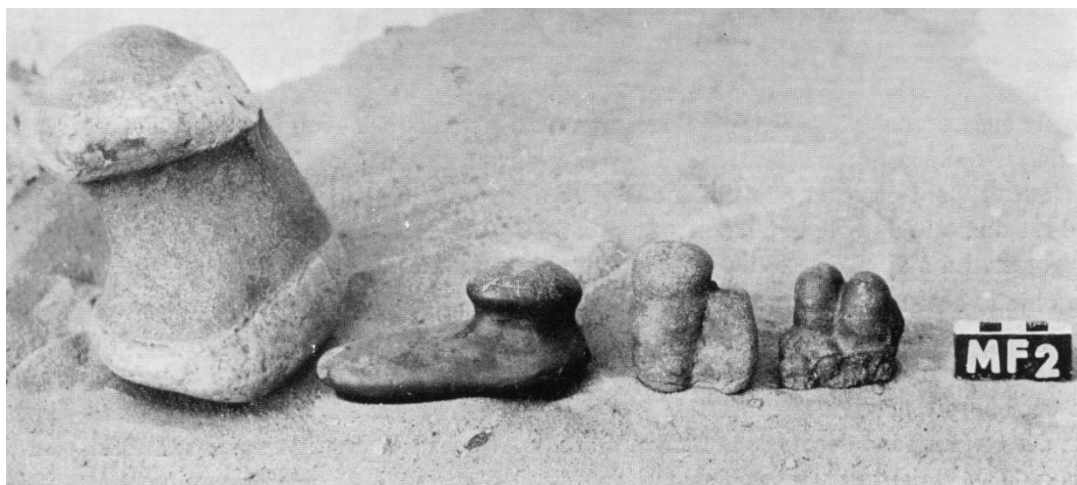


Figure 173 – Phallus-shaped pebbles and breast-shape pebble from Mirgissa. Karlin, “Sanctuaire,” fig. 28.1.



Figure 174 (left) – *Akhet* or moon-with-crescent, from Deir el-Medina. Image from Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, fig. 14.
Figure 175 (right) – *Akhet* or moon-with-crescent pebbles, from Valley of the Kings. Image from Reeves, “Decorated pebbles,” fig. 2.

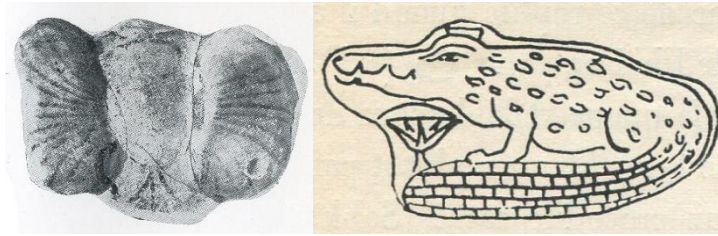


Figure 176 (left) – Scarab-shaped pebble, from Deir el-Medina. Image from Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, pl. 9.3.
Figure 177 (right) – Pebble decorated as crocodile, from Deir el-Medina. Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, fig. 11.

Scholarship has noted associations between flint and solar deities, protective forces, lunar figures, and fertility. The origin of the flints, Western Thebes, at the mountain known locally as “the Qurn,” appeared to have been a place symbolic of rebirth.¹¹⁶⁵ As Richards noted, the Qurn has a likeness to the primeval mound.¹¹⁶⁶ Likewise, the motif of the celestial cow emerging from the mountain is a theme linked to Western Thebes.¹¹⁶⁷

As seen with the number of flints in the shape of solar disks and *ꜥht*-signs, Egyptians connected flint to the sun god. The scarab flints likely represented the newborn sun-god.¹¹⁶⁸ A similar solar association is evident in two stelae from Deir el-Medina with embedded flints.

Graves-Brown assumed that the first, Bankes Stele 4,¹¹⁶⁹ originally held a crescent moon with

¹¹⁶⁵ Graves-Brown, “Emergent Flints,” 55; C. Graves-Brown, “Licking knives and stone snakes: The ideology of flint knives in Ancient Egypt,” in *Archaeology, History and Science: Integrating Approaches to Ancient Materials*, ed. R. Martínón-Torres (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press 2008), 44.

¹¹⁶⁶ J.E. Richards, “Conceptual Landscapes in the Nile Valley,” in *Archaeologies of Landscape: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. E. Ashmore and B.A. Knapp (Malden and Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 88.

¹¹⁶⁷ Graves-Brown, “Emergent Flints,” 50.

¹¹⁶⁸ Graves-Brown, “Emergent flints,” 55; Ibid., “Licking knives,” 44.

¹¹⁶⁹ J. Černý, *Egyptian Stelae in the Bankes Collection* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1958), Cat. 4.

lunar disk based on the inscription's opening "the great moon which is in Re,"¹¹⁷⁰ though Wilkinson's field note,¹¹⁷¹ the solar context of the inscription and solar barque, and the hill-sign¹¹⁷² beneath the space for the pebble indicate that it was an *šht*-sign. Some scholars assumed that the other stela (Figure 178)¹¹⁷³ held a moon disk,¹¹⁷⁴ but the image clearly showed a solar disk.¹¹⁷⁵



Figure 178 – Stela with pebble inclusion shaped like sun disk, from Deir el-Medina. Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, pl. 10.

¹¹⁷⁰ Graves-Brown, "Emergent flints," 48-9; Ibid., "Ideological significance of flint," 184.

¹¹⁷¹ As noted in Černý, *Egyptian Stelae in the Bankes Collection*, Cat. 4.

¹¹⁷² Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Grammar*, Sign-list, N26.

¹¹⁷³ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, pl. XXIII.1; Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, pl. X.

¹¹⁷⁴ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 199-200; Graves-Brown, "Ideological significance of flint," 183.

¹¹⁷⁵ Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Grammar*, Sign-list, N6.

Religious texts offer further support for a link between the sun and flint. Several religious papyri referred to Re using a flint knife to repel enemies and defeat Apophis.¹¹⁷⁶ Similarly, Egyptians used flint in the ritual ‘trampling of the fish,’ an execration against enemies of the sun god, during the Festival of Edfu.¹¹⁷⁷ Horus likewise had associations with flint, sometimes holding the title ‘Lord of the knife.’¹¹⁷⁸ In some versions of one spell from the Book of the Dead,¹¹⁷⁹ Horus held the epithet ‘flint-eyed one.’ In reference to his actions against foes, reliefs from the Temple of Edfu stated that “his arm is like flint.”¹¹⁸⁰ As a desert-dweller and Eye of Re/Horus, Sekhmet also had associations with flint.¹¹⁸¹ In CT 311, “Sekhmet is she who wielded the Viper-Mountain knife¹¹⁸² on the night of the great battle...”¹¹⁸³ She also held flint-related titles such as ‘Mistress of fire’¹¹⁸⁴ and ‘Knife of the king.’¹¹⁸⁵ Isis, who also could be the Eye of Re/Horus,¹¹⁸⁶ notably turned her head to flint after being beheaded by Horus in one episode of The Contendings of Horus and Seth.¹¹⁸⁷

¹¹⁷⁶ P. Bremner-Rhind 27, 21 [R.O. Faulkner, *The Papyrus Bremner-Rhind III (BM no. 10188)* (Brussels: Édition de la Fondation égyptienne Reine Elisabeth, 1933), 21; Ibid., “The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus III,” *JEA* 10 (1937): 173.]; P. Salt 825 [P. Derchain, *Le Papyrus Salt 825 (BM 10051)* (Brussels: Palais des Académies, 1965), 139 and 7, col. 6/5.].

¹¹⁷⁷ D. Meeks and C. Favard-Meeks, *Daily Life of the Egyptian Gods*, transl. G.M. Goshgarian (London: John Murray, 1996), 181.

¹¹⁷⁸ P. Wilson, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon: A lexicographical study of the texts in the temple of Edfu* (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters en Department Oosterse Studies, 1997), 1208.

¹¹⁷⁹ BD 125b, 7 [T.G. Allen, *The Book of the Dead or Going Forth by Day: Ideas of the Ancient Egyptians Concerning the Hereafter as Expressed in Their Own Terms* (SAOC 37; Chicago: University of Chicago, 1974), 98; J. Yoyotte, “Le Jugement des morts dans l’Égypte ancienne,” in *Le Jugement des morts, Sources Orientales* 4 (Paris: Seuil, 1961), 57.].

¹¹⁸⁰ E. Chassinat, *Le Temple d’Edfou* 6 (Cairo: IFAO, 1931), 127,11; M. Alliot, *Le culte d’Horus à Edfou au temps des Ptolémées II*, (BdE 20.2; Cairo: IFAO, 1954), 525, 753; Aufrère, *L’Univers minéral II*, 565.

¹¹⁸¹ Graves-Brown, “The spitting goddess,” 63.

¹¹⁸² Mountain associated with flint, for ex: BD 31a. Graves-Brown, “The spitting goddess,” 63.

¹¹⁸³ De Buck, *CT IV*, 67; Faulkner, *Coffin Texts*, 228.

¹¹⁸⁴ Borghouts, “The Evil Eye of Apophis,” 136.

¹¹⁸⁵ Morschauser, *Threat-formulae in ancient Egypt*, 140.

¹¹⁸⁶ Ex: BD 69 referred to her as ‘fiery one’ (*ꜥsb.t*).

¹¹⁸⁷ 9, 9-10: A.H. Gardiner, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies* (Brussels: BAe 7, 1937) 49(16)-50(1).; Graves-Brown, “The spitting goddess,” 63.

Several protective liminal deities wielded flint knives.¹¹⁸⁸ Anubis wielded flint knives in Papyrus Jumilhac.¹¹⁸⁹ There are also spells in the Book of the Dead which describe 'flinty' doorkeepers, both directly¹¹⁹⁰ and through the indirect expression *mds hr*.¹¹⁹¹ Egyptians also associated flint with snakes, perhaps due to similar desert environments and the spit of snakes being similar to the spalls of flint manufacture.¹¹⁹² A couple of spells from the Pyramid Texts referenced a particolored knife,¹¹⁹³ which is either green or black, which “has swallowed for itself that which it has licked.” As noted by Graves-Brown,¹¹⁹⁴ these colors have associations with fertility. Likewise, Ritner noted that *nsb* “licking” had magical parallels to the spitting of snakes.¹¹⁹⁵ Several Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom funerary spells¹¹⁹⁶ discuss the snake “who is on his mountain, who is in his flame,” whose front part is made of flint, being on the mountain *Bshw*, a realm associated with rebirth.¹¹⁹⁷ The snake in these spells likely referred to Apophis, who later held titles such as “who is in his flame”¹¹⁹⁸ and “stone.”¹¹⁹⁹

As discussed above, some of the flint pebbles were in the shape of a crescent moon with a lunar disk. Thoth, in his role as moon god, closely held associations with flint. Thoth was commonly worshipped at Deir el-Medina¹²⁰⁰ so it is sensible that such Theban material held a

¹¹⁸⁸ Graves-Brown, “spitting goddess,” 66.

¹¹⁸⁹ Vandier, *Le Papyrus Jumilhac*, 125, pl. 13.

¹¹⁹⁰ Naville, *Das Äg. Totenbuch*, 371; Allen, *The Book of the Dead* (1974), 125-276; J.Cl. Goyon, *Les dieux-gardiens et la genèse des temples : d'après les textes égyptiens de l'époque gréco-romaine* (BdE 93; Cairo: IFAO, 1985), 69-70, 71; Aufrère, *L'Univers minéral* II, 565.

¹¹⁹¹ Cairo 51189, spell 144 [E. Naville, *The funerary papyrus of Iouiya* (London: Constable, 1908), pl. 19-20.]; P. Brockelhurst II [Naville, *Das Äg. Totenbuch*, 369.].

¹¹⁹² Graves-Brown, “Licking knives,” 59.

¹¹⁹³ *PT* §§ 228 (Sp. 228), 431 (Sp. 290).

¹¹⁹⁴ Graves-Brown, “Licking knives,” 59.

¹¹⁹⁵ Ritner, *Mechanics*, 97-8.

¹¹⁹⁶ *CT* 160, 375b; *BD* 108, 111; P. Turin 1993, 2.4-6.

¹¹⁹⁷ G. Posener, “Sur l’orientation et l’ordre des points cardinaux chez les Égyptiens,” in *Göttinger Vorträge von Ägyptologischen Kolloquium der Akademie am 25. Und 26. August 1964*, ed. S. Schott (Göttingen: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1965), 76.

¹¹⁹⁸ Borghouts, *Leiden I* 348, 207-8; *Ibid.*, “The Evil Eye of Apophis,” *JEA* 59 (1973): 114 n. 7.

¹¹⁹⁹ Aufrère, *L'Univers minéral* I, 98-9.

¹²⁰⁰ A.I. Sadek, *Popular Religion in Egypt during the New Kingdom* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1987), 111.

connection to the god. For example, Turin Inv. 50047, a stele dedicated to Thoth from Deir el-Medina, held an embedded flint in the shape of a lunar crescent and disk.¹²⁰¹ As Thoth-Re, he protected the king.¹²⁰² Additionally, Kees had pointed out that the crescent moon is the knife of Thoth.¹²⁰³ The term *mds/ m ds* “to cut/kill with a knife,”¹²⁰⁴ occurred in relation to Thoth in both the Pyramid Texts and possibly the Book of the Dead.¹²⁰⁵ Elsewhere in the Pyramid Texts, spells described Thoth as bearing knives or flint objects.¹²⁰⁶ In a different story from Papyrus Westcar,¹²⁰⁷ one section referenced to a “chest of flint in the building called ‘inventory in On’ which contains the number of secret chambers in the sanctuary of Thoth.” Finally, relief scenes from the temple of Dendera described the sun and moon as like shining gold (*ḥd mk m nbw*) and flint.¹²⁰⁸

Seth likewise held connections with the moon and flint. In some spells from the Pyramid Texts and Coffin Texts,¹²⁰⁹ *ds* “flint” originated from Seth.¹²¹⁰ Later, in the Adventures of Horus and Seth, he gave birth to the moon.¹²¹¹

Goddesses equated to the Eye of Re, such as Isis and Tefnut, also had connections to the moon and minerals.¹²¹² Previous scholars had noted that Egyptians considered solar rays as

¹²⁰¹ M. Tosi and A. Roccati, *Stele e Altre Epigrafi di Deir el Medina*. N. 5001-50262 (Turin: Edizioni d'Arte Fratelli Pozzo, 1972), 80, no. 50047; Graves-Brown, “Ideological significance of flint,” 184.

¹²⁰² Aufrère, *L'Univers minéral* I, 258.

¹²⁰³ H. Kees, “Zu den Agyptischen Mondsagen,” *ZÄS* 60 (1925): 1-15, esp. 3.

¹²⁰⁴ *Wb.* II, 486, 11-16.

¹²⁰⁵ *PT* § 1999c [K. Sethe, *Die Altägyptischen Pyramidentexte: Nach den Papierdrücken und Photographien des Berliner Museums* (Heidelberg: Georg Olms 1969), 483.]; *BD* 149 [Navielle, *Die Ägyptische Totenbuch*, 416.].

¹²⁰⁶ Ex: *PT* Sp. 477 (§ 962), 665 (§ 1906), 674 (§ 1999); Faulkner, *The ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 165, 275, and 288.

¹²⁰⁷ Lines 9,4-5: A. Gardiner, “The secret chambers of the Sanctuary of Thoth,” *JEA* 11 (1925): 2-5.

¹²⁰⁸ *Dendera X*, 258, 11-12 in S. Cauville et al., *Le Temple de Dendara: les chapelles osiriennes* I (BdÉ 117; Cairo: IFAO, 1997), 138; Graves-Brown, “Flint and the Northern Sky,” 112.

¹²⁰⁹ *PT* Sp. 665 (§ 1906), 674 (§ 1999); *CT* § 1491.

¹²¹⁰ Graves-Brown, “Licking knives,” 11.

¹²¹¹ A.H. Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri of the British Museum, Third series: Chester Beatty Gift*, Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum 3 (London: British Museum, 1935), 107.

¹²¹² Aufrère, “L'étrange et la curiosité,” 74; Graves-Brown, “Emergent Flints,” 56.

masculine and the moon disk as feminine.¹²¹³ Thus, the pebbles may have embodied both lunar and feminine elements.¹²¹⁴

Most notable for our purposes are the flints related to fertility, especially the pregnant/mother-and-child shapes. These pebbles were likely either a type of fertility figurine or represented a pregnant goddess, both outside normal Egyptian conventions.¹²¹⁵ The lotus embellishments on some conjured images of primeval, water beginnings from Nun.¹²¹⁶ Given their presence in Hathor temples, these flints appeared to have been votives to Hathor,¹²¹⁷ perhaps even images of her.¹²¹⁸ Indeed, the medical/magical spells we will discuss below associated pregnancy and childbirth with the goddess.¹²¹⁹ Religious texts related flint to celestial “mineral wonders,” called *biꜣ*.¹²²⁰ Notably, Hathor had close associations with *biꜣ*, holding epithets such as *bjꜣ ḥnt psdt ʿꜣt* “the Mineral Wonder presiding over the Great Ennead” and *wr(t) bjꜣ ḥnt tn.wj* “venerable of mineral marvels which presides over the two limits.”¹²²¹

The Deir el-Medina variation of female pebbles (Figure 179), with disk-shaped stomachs, appeared as extensions of this Hathorian theme. Graves-Brown had considered them to have represented Nut,¹²²² but the evidence suggests they embodied Hathor. A close parallel comes from the first hour of the Book of Day, depicted on several 20th Dynasty and 22nd Dynasty royal

¹²¹³ J.G. Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride* (Swansea, 1970), 187; Troy, *Patterns of Queenship*, 15, 19; Graves-Brown, “Emergent flints,” 56-7.

¹²¹⁴ Graves-Brown, “Emergent Flints,” 57.

¹²¹⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 220; Graves-Brown, “Emergent flints,” 50.

¹²¹⁶ Graves-Brown, “Emergent flints,” 53; Ibid., “Ideological significance of flint,” 185.

¹²¹⁷ Karlin, “Sanctuaire d’Hathor,” 329.

¹²¹⁸ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 220.

¹²¹⁹ See §§ 5.2.4.2-3.

¹²²⁰ G.A. Wainwright, “Letopolis,” *JEA* 18 (1932): 159-172; Roth, “Fingers, Stars, and the ‘Opening of the Mouth,’” 72.

¹²²¹ Aufrère, *L’Univers minéral* I, 103, nn. 146-7.

¹²²² Graves-Brown, “Emergent flints,” 53-54.

tombs (Figure 180),¹²²³ where an unnamed frontal female holds a large sun disk enclosing a child and is flanked by two attendants. While most scholars had assumed that this figure was Nut,¹²²⁴ the evidence contextual, iconographic, and textual evidence suggest she was Hathor. By the opening scene in the Book of Day, four baboons called *Bentiu* have the following inscription, “Punt is their home. They are in the land of the ape-headed ones...their land is the eastern horizon. They abhor lies.”¹²²⁵ Punt is a region that is closely associated with Hathor. A parallel scene from the tomb of Nakhtamun at Deir el-Medina depicts a frontal female (Figure 181),¹²²⁶ with distinctly Hathorian hairstyle,¹²²⁷ holding a solar disk. Another related image is a scene from the Book of the Earth from Ramses VI’s sarcophagus chamber, where a cow-eared female with tripartite wig, clearly Hathor, extended her arms from a solar disk.¹²²⁸ Textual evidence comes from a eulogy to Atum-Harakhti in a New Kingdom solar hymn,¹²²⁹ which states, “Sun disc within (*m-hnw-ꜥ*) your mother Hathor.”

¹²²³ G. Daressy, *Ostraca* (CGC; Cairo: IFAO, 1901), pl. 15; P. Montet, *Les constructions et le tombeau d’Osorkon II à Tanis* (La Nécropole Royale de Tanis 1; Paris: Jourde et Allard, 1947), pls. 21, 25; A. Piankoff, *The tomb of Ramesses VI* (Egyptian Texts and Representations 1, Bollingen Series 40; New York: Pantheon Books, 1954), pls. 149, 187; M. Müller-Roth, *Das Buch vom Tage* (OBO 236; Fribourg and Göttingen: Academic Press; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), pls. 1-2, 17, 23; Roberts, “Invisible Hathor,” Figs. 1-2.

¹²²⁴ Ex: A. Piankoff, “La vierge ‘Znamenie’ et la déesse Nout,” *Bulletin de la Société d’Archéologie Copte* 16 (1962): 266; Hornung, *Ägyptische Unterweltsbücher*, 487-8; Desroches-Noblecourt, *Amours et fureurs*, 115-6; Spieser, “Femmes et divinités enceintes,” 67; Graves-Brown, “Emergent Flints,” 52; Müller-Roth, *Das Buch vom Tage*, 9, 72-3, n. 319; contra Dorman, “Creation on the potter’s wheel,” 87-9.

¹²²⁵ Müller-Roth, *Das Buch vom Tage*, 115-6, text D.

¹²²⁶ Roberts, “Invisible Hathor,” 164, Fig. 3.

¹²²⁷ Hornung 1979: 195, n. 24.

¹²²⁸ Piankoff, *The tomb of Ramses VI*, pls. 130-1; Roberts, “Invisible Hathor,” 164.

¹²²⁹ BM EA 551 [I.E.S. Edwards, *Hieroglyphic texts from Egyptian stelae etc. in the British Museum* VIII (London: British Museum, 1939), 31-33, pl. 28; *Urk.* IV, 2094-99.]; Cairo JE 44772 [J.E. Quibell and A.G.K. Hayter, *Excavations at Saqqara: Teti Pyramid, north side* (Cairo: IFAO, 1927), 32-33, pl. 9.]; BM EA 10471 [S. Quirke, *Owners of funerary papyri in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1993), 119.].



Figure 179 – Deir el-Medina type of pregnant-woman pebbles. Image from Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, pl. 7.

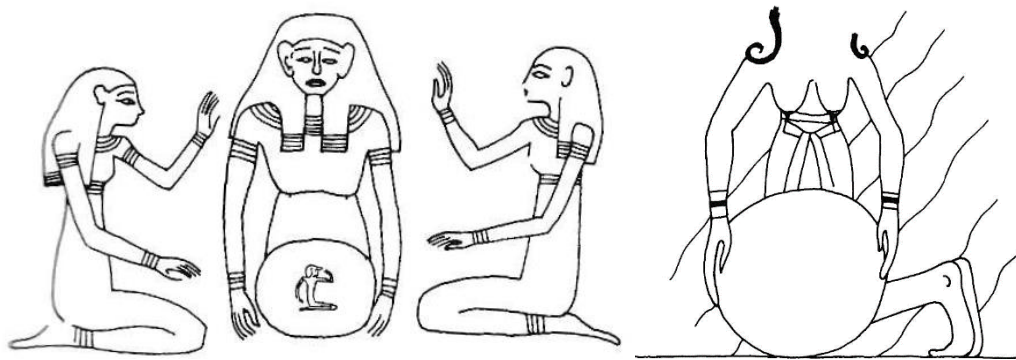


Figure 180 (left) – Solar mother from 1st hour of Book of Day, Tomb of Ramses VI. Image from Roberts, “Invisible Hathor,” fig. 1.

Figure 181 (right) – Hathor from tomb of Nakhtamun at Deir el-Medina. Roberts, “Invisible Hathor,” fig. 3.

Flints in other shapes likewise had fertility associations. Excavators found phallic-shaped objects, including pebbles, at Hathor temples at Deir el-Bahari, Mirgissa, Timna, and Gebel Zeit, indicating they were votives in honor of the goddess.¹²³⁰ It is notable that the crocodile-shaped

¹²³⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 235-245.

flint resembled the position of crocodile on at least one paddle doll and the magic wands.¹²³¹ The snake-like flint, found in a chapel along with a stela dedicated to Thoth, is interpreted as an offering to Meretseger,¹²³² who can embody a fertility function.¹²³³

The pebble-figurines, though having solar, protective, and lunar symbolism, had especially strong association with fertility and Hathor. They were a particularly Theban votive type, with others likely imported to Hathor temples. Though they commonly dated to the New Kingdom, especially the Ramesside period, figured pebbles had its origins to the Predynastic, Early Dynastic, and Old Kingdom. The importance of the New Kingdom pregnant form is also seen in some woman-figured vessels. While the pebbles, with their frequency in Deir el-Medina, appeared to have been a non-elite object type, the figured vessels appear to have belonged in the elite sphere.

3.5 Woman-Figured Vessels

Besides figurines, objects depicting women to harness an aspect of fertility also included pottery and alabaster vessels. During the mid-18th Dynasty, along with other figure vase types, vessels depicting pregnant women and kneeling women made up distinct genres. Both harkened to different aspects of fertility: pregnancy and possession of children. However, many of these objects do not have provenance, which complicates understanding their usage.

¹²³¹ Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, 13; Graves-Brown, “Ideological significance of flint,” 183.

¹²³² Bruyère 1930, 60, fig. 25; Keimer, *Jeux de la nature*, 15, pl. 9.

¹²³³ See below, § 6.2.12.

3.5.1 Pregnant Woman Vessels

Comprising a distinct genre of at least fifteen known examples, certain alabaster jars dating from the mid-18th Dynasty depicted a pregnant woman.¹²³⁴ Unfortunately, only a few had archaeological context.¹²³⁵ Nevertheless, certain features indicate the use of these vessels: the pregnancy itself, the lack of visible genitalia, and oil horns.



Figure 182 (left) – Tübingen 967. Brunner-Traut, “Gravidenflasche,” Taf. 2a.
Figure 183 (middle) – Cairo CG 18418. Brunner-Traut, “Gravidenflasche,” Taf. 4a.
Figure 184 (right) – MFA 02.525. Brunner-Traut, “Gravidenflasche,” Taf. 5b.

Often the main discernable physical feature of the vessels was the pregnant form itself. Most depicted the woman with hands on her stomach and a braid coming down the back that served as a handle, though two examples instead had Hathoric hairstyles. A variation of the usual

¹²³⁴ M. Murray, “Figure-Vases in Egypt,” in *Historical Studies*, ed. W.M.F. Petrie (London: Quaritch, 1911), pl. XXIV.44-47; Brunner-Traut, “Gravidenflasche,” 35-48, pls. 1-7; Brunner-Traut, *Die alten Ägypter*, 54, pl. 16a; S.K. Doll, “Medicine,” in *Egypt’s Golden Age, the art of Living in the New Kingdom 1558-1085 B.C.*, ed. R. Freed (Boston: MFA, 1982), 292-3, Cat. 402-403.

¹²³⁵ Ashmolean 1924.88 (Stevens, *Private religion*, 182-3, from house Q46.53 (obj. 24/782); Balabish: (Wainwright, *Balabish*, 56, pl. XX); BM 65275 (Abydos Tomb 949: J. Garstang, “Excavations at Abydos, 1909: Preliminary Description of the Principal Finds,” *AAA* 2 (1909): pl.16; Robins, *Reflections of Women*, p.73, pl. 38; C. H. Roehrig, “Vase in the Form of a Pregnant woman with a child on her back,” in *Hatshepsut. From Queen to Pharaoh*, ed. C.H. Roehrig (New York, 2006), p. 241).

type had the woman wearing a girdle and holding a lute in front of her.¹²³⁶ Interestingly, one jar depicts a child climbing the woman's back.¹²³⁷ In a rather unique example, the woman, with leonine legs, holds a *sz*-sign in front of her and possesses on her forearms tattoos of Bes.¹²³⁸ In fact, the original publication of the vessel listed it as "Tauert, standing."¹²³⁹ These features indicate that the form of the pregnant woman on these jars harkened to Taweret, which would indicate a role in pregnancy.¹²⁴⁰ An interesting parallel is a wooden anthropomorphic ointment pot which represented Queen Tiye as a Taweret figure, with feline legs and crocodile tail.¹²⁴¹

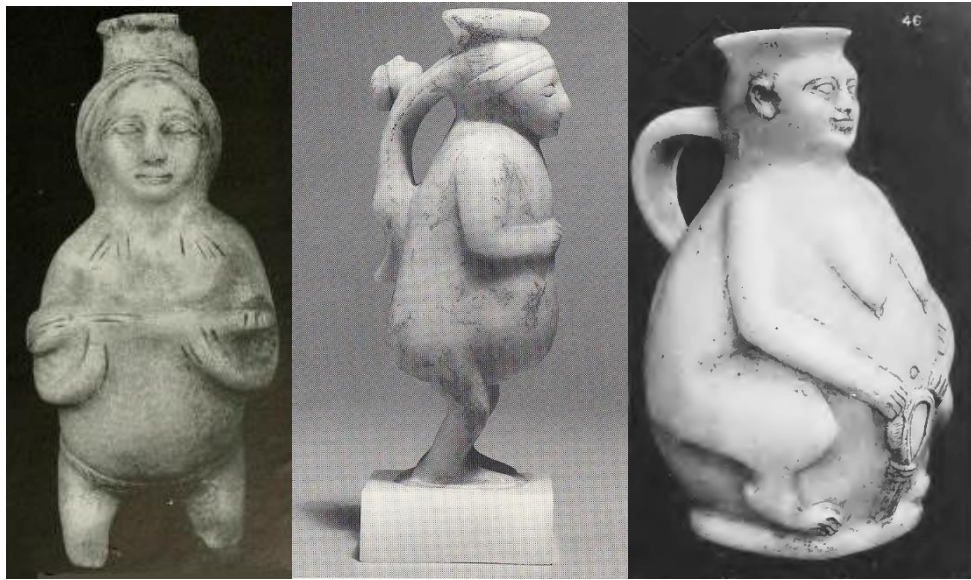


Figure 185 (left) – Pregnant woman vessel holding lute. Image from Wainwright, *Balabish*, pl. XX.
Figure 186 (middle) – BM 65275, from Abydos Tomb 949. Image from Robins, *Reflections*, pl. 15, Cat. 38.
Figure 187 (right) – NY Carlsberg Glyptotek 1646. Image from Murray, "Figure Vases," pl. XXIV.46.

¹²³⁶ Brunner-Traut, "Gravidenflasche," 38-39, BM 30459 and Wainwright, *Balabish*, pl. XX.

¹²³⁷ BM 65275.

¹²³⁸ Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek 1646.

¹²³⁹ Murray, "Figure Vases," 44.

¹²⁴⁰ Brunner-Traut, "Gravidenflasche," 40-41.

¹²⁴¹ Spieser, "Femmes et divinités enceintes," 61-62, Fig. 9.

In addition to indicating pregnancy, the form of the jars depicted a New Kingdom variation of the Middle Kingdom female dwarf, with a number featuring shorter legs. Many of the male and female dwarf figurines similar had their hands on their belly. Likewise, at least two male Middle Kingdom dwarfs bear musical instruments (Table 10) like one of the vessels (Figure 185). Another vessel (Figure 191) featured a painted cowrie belt and jewelry similar to Middle Kingdom nude female figurines.

Another notable feature is the general lack of visible genitalia.¹²⁴² In one case,¹²⁴³ the pregnant woman wears a belt and what appears to be a tampon. A parallel to such a depiction is an ivory statuette of unclear date,¹²⁴⁴ where a woman holding a child similarly wears a tampon. As we will discuss below, the anti-miscarriage spells featured such a device to prevent miscarriage.¹²⁴⁵ The lack of genitalia on the jars seemed to have operated on the same principle, leaving no room for a malicious force to cause a miscarriage.¹²⁴⁶

¹²⁴² Brunner-Traut, "Gravidenflasche," 41, with exception of CG 18421.

¹²⁴³ Cairo JE 34403: Spieser, "Femmes et divinités enceintes," 58, fig. 5.

¹²⁴⁴ Brunner-Traut, "Gravidenflasche," 41, Taf.8 (Berlin 17600). For dating issue, see W. S. Smith, *History of Egyptian sculpture and painting in the Old Kingdom*, 2nd ed. (Boston: MFA, 1948), 1-2, fig. 4 (middle).

¹²⁴⁵ Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri*, no. 27-30; Spieser, "Femmes et divinités enceintes," 58. See § 5.2.4.2.

¹²⁴⁶ Brunner-Traut, "Gravidenflasche," 41-42.



Figure 188 (left) – Turin Inv. 8798. Image from Speiser, "Femmes et divinités enceintes," fig. 9.
Figure 189 (right) – Berlin 17600, Early Dynastic Period. Image from Brunner-Traut, "Gravidenflasche," Taf. 8a.



Figure 190 (left) – Cairo CG 18421. Image from von Bissing, *Steingefäße*, Taf. III.
Figure 191 (right) – Cairo JE 34403. Image from Speiser, "Femmes et divinités enceintes," fig. 5.

Some of the jars depict the woman holding a horn.¹²⁴⁷ Private tombs and temple walls also represented these horns, with the latter depicting them as items of tribute given to deities.¹²⁴⁸ In fact, there are examples of such horns.¹²⁴⁹ Those horns with context tended to come from the

¹²⁴⁷ Ex: Brooklyn L 60.7. E. Naville, "Figurines égyptiennes de l'époque archaïque," *Rec Trav.* 22 (1900): 65, pl. 1-III (middle).

¹²⁴⁸ W. Helck, *Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vorderasien im 3. Und 2. Jahrtausend v.Chr.* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1962), p. 458 note 165.

¹²⁴⁹ Ex: J. Cooney, "Persian influence in Late Egyptian Art," *JARCE* 4 (1965): 45-46, pl. 27.9-10; Robins, *Reflections*, Cat. 41; Speiser, "Femmes et divinités enceintes," 56

tombs of women.¹²⁵⁰ Some of the horns had spoons with figures of deities associated with birth, such as Bes¹²⁵¹ and Hathor.¹²⁵² There has been disagreement whether these horns were for bloodletting,¹²⁵³ containing oil,¹²⁵⁴ serving pregnant women,¹²⁵⁵ holding cosmetics,¹²⁵⁶ or containing medicine.¹²⁵⁷ Previous analysis of the contents found both powders and liquids in the horns.¹²⁵⁸ In a more recent examination of the contents of two horns from two different sites using IR spectral analysis found remains of oil with organic compounds and no resins.¹²⁵⁹ Given the narrow spouts of the horns and small spoons accompanying them, the contents were either medicinal or otherwise a costly substance administered in small doses.¹²⁶⁰

¹²⁵⁰ Brunner-Traut, "Gravidenflasche," 43; Petrie, *IKG*, 22, pl. XXVI. 50; Petrie, *Qurneh*, Tav. XXV; Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 84,86, with exception to horn found in Deir el-Medina tomb 1389 (JE 54893).

¹²⁵¹ E. Prisse d'Avennes, *Histoire de l'art égyptien: Atlas 2* (Paris, 1878), pl. 86.

¹²⁵² W. Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, V. 1 (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1923), pl. 56b; G. Benedite, *Objets de Toiletes*, v. II, CG 45201; Doll, "Medicine," 293, Cat. 403.

¹²⁵³ Cooney, "Persian influence," 46f. and pl. 28.

¹²⁵⁴ Davies, *The tomb of Rekh-mi-Rē*, 28, n. 58.

¹²⁵⁵ Brunner-Traut, "Gravidenflasche," 46-8.

¹²⁵⁶ Ex: Petrie, *Labyrinth*, 23 to Taf. VII, 13.

¹²⁵⁷ Doll, "Medicine," 292, Cat. 402-4.

¹²⁵⁸ Desroches-Noblecourt, "Pots anthropomorphes," 65.

¹²⁵⁹ O. Hassanein and N. Iskander, "Shedding light on the functions of some unknown objects in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo," in *Egyptology at the dawn of the twenty-first century: proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists, Cairo, 2000*, V. 3, ed. Z. Hawass and L.P. Brock volume 3 (Cairo; New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2003), 224.

¹²⁶⁰ Brunner-Traut, "Gravidenflasche," 44; Hassanein and Iskander, "Shedding light," 224.



Figure 192 – Brooklyn L 60.7. Image from Naville, “Figurines égyptiennes,” pl. 1 (middle).

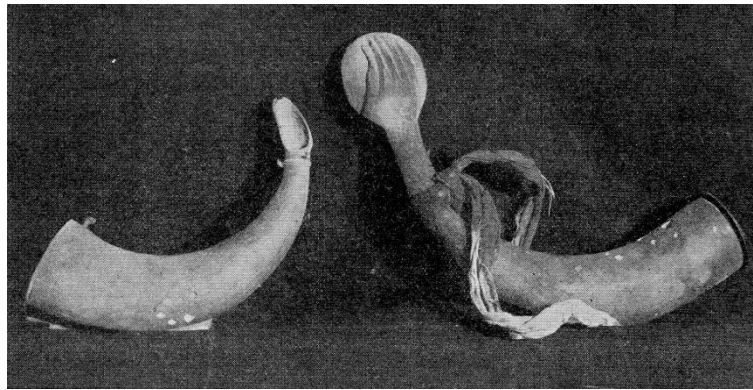


Figure 193 – Oil horns from Deir el-Medina. Image from Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, fig. 42.

Given the gesture of the women rubbing their bellies, Brunner-Traut had considered the jars as containing a medicinal oil to treat stretch marks.¹²⁶¹ The Taweret-form and lack of genitalia indicate a use pertaining to pregnant women, and the oil horns primarily occurred in association with women. These jars focused on pregnancy, while the contemporary mother’s milk vessel emphasized the period post-birth.

¹²⁶¹ Brunner-Traut, “Gravidenflasche,” 46-48.

3.5.2 Mother's Milk Vessels

A characteristic of the period between the reigns of Thutmose III and Amenhotep III are molded clay flasks in the shape of animals and humans.¹²⁶² In this category belonged a sixteen vessels depicting a kneeling woman with a child. They varied from 9.7 cm to 17 cm, and had an average carrying capacity of 102 to 140 cm.¹²⁶³ Women typically wore straight skirts with shawls. When preserved, the vessels placed the spouts on top of the women's heads and had finger-loops for pouring. The children on these flasks either lay or sat upon the woman's lap, hung from the woman's back, or actively breastfed. In at least two cases, the woman squeezed her right breast with her right hand in an act of nursing, even when the vessel did not portray the child suckling. While the gender of the infant was not always clear, most identifiable cases involved males.¹²⁶⁴



Figure 194 – Ashmolean 1921.1920. Image from Petrie, *Sedment II*, XLVIII.
Figure 195 - BM EA 62652. Image from Robins, *Reflections*, pl. 15 (Cat. 39).

¹²⁶² J. Bourriau, "Clay Figure Vases," in *Egypt's Golden Age: The Art of Living in the New Kingdom 1558-1085 B.C.*, ed. R. Freed (Boston: MFA, 1982), 101.

¹²⁶³ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 163.

¹²⁶⁴ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 147-151.

Unfortunately, most of these vessels did not have excavated context. Of the few with secure context, four originated from tombs¹²⁶⁵ and two from the Main City in Amarna,¹²⁶⁶ while museum records attested another three from Saqqara,¹²⁶⁷ Gurob,¹²⁶⁸ and Thebes.¹²⁶⁹ However, they appear standardized, being all of fine marl clay, red-slipped, and possessed painted black decoration, which suggested to Bourriau that a single workshop produced these objects.¹²⁷⁰

Table 16 – Woman-Shaped Milk Vessels

Vessel	Site	Context	Child	Hair	Feature
BM 54694 ¹²⁷¹	Abydos	Tomb 949	Back	Ponytail with 2 front locks	Horn with spoon, moon amulet
Ashmolean E.2432 ¹²⁷²	Abydos	Tomb 949	None	Ponytail with 2 front locks	Necklace and hip girdle
Ashmolean 1921.1290 ¹²⁷³	Sedment	Tomb 263	N/A	Heavy wig	Nursing
Ashmolean 1921.1291 ¹²⁷⁴	Sedment	Tomb 263			Moon amulet
Ashmolean 1924.89 ¹²⁷⁵	Amarna	MC, Q45.64	N/A	Heavy wig	
Ashmolean 1924.97 ¹²⁷⁶	Amarna	Main City	N/A	N/A	Collar

¹²⁶⁵ BM 54694, Ashmolean E.2432, Ashmolean 1921.1290 and Ashmolean 1921.1291.

¹²⁶⁶ Ashmolean 1924.89 and 1924.97.

¹²⁶⁷ Brooklyn 37335 E.

¹²⁶⁸ BM 14434.

¹²⁶⁹ Leiden AT69.

¹²⁷⁰ J. Bourriau, "Pottery Figure Vases of the New Kingdom," *Cahiers de la Céramique Égyptienne* I (1987): 94.

¹²⁷¹ Garstang, "Excavations at Abydos, 1909," 129, pl. XVI; Brunner-Traut, "Das Muttermilchkrügel," 145-64; Bourriau, "Pottery Figure Vases of the New Kingdom," 93-94; Robins, *Reflections of Women*, 76, no. 40.

¹²⁷² Ayrton et al., *Abydos III*, 49-50, pl. xvi; Murray, *Figure Vases in Egypt*, pl. XXV, 66; MacIver and Mace, *El Amrah*, pl. xlvii, D29; Hayes, *Scepter II*, fig. 110; Bourriau, *Umm el Gaab*, 34-5, Cat. 48.

¹²⁷³ Petrie and Brunton, *Sedment II*, 23, pl. XLVIII.25; Bourriau, *Umm el Gaab*, 35, Cat. 50.

¹²⁷⁴ Bourriau, "Pottery Figure Vases," 94; C. Lilyquist, "Egypt and the Near East: Evidence of Contact in the Material Record," in *Hatshepsut from Queen to Pharaoh*, ed. C.H. Roehrig et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), n. 77; S. Buden, *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 143.

¹²⁷⁵ Stevens, *Private religion*, 182-3, Fig. II.8.15.

¹²⁷⁶ Stevens, *Private religion*, 182-3.

Brooklyn 37335E ¹²⁷⁷	Saqqara	Unknown	Lap	N/A	N/A
Leiden AT69 ¹²⁷⁸	Thebes	Unknown	Lap, lying male	Heavy wig	Nursing
BM 14434 ¹²⁷⁹	Gurob	Unknown	Lap	N/A	N/A
MFA 1985.336 ¹²⁸⁰	N/A	N/A	Lap	Ponytail with 2 front locks	
Louvre N 969 ¹²⁸¹	N/A	N/A	Lap, seated	Ponytail with 2 front locks	Nursing, Moon amulet
Moscow 3632 ¹²⁸²	N/A	N/A	Lap, lying, male	Ponytail with 2 front locks	Nursing
MMA 25.7.42 ¹²⁸³	N/A	N/A	Suckling	Ponytail with 2 front locks	
BM 66711 ¹²⁸⁴	N/A	N/A	Back	Heavy wig	Horn
Berlin 14476 ¹²⁸⁵	N/A	N/A	Lap, seated	Ponytail with 2 front locks	Moon amulet
Louvre E 11276 ¹²⁸⁶	N/A	N/A	Back	Ponytail with 2 front locks	Horn, moon amulet
Louvre AF 1660 ¹²⁸⁷	N/A	N/A	Lap, seated, male	Ponytail with 2 front locks	Moon amulet (?)
Brooklyn 61.9 ¹²⁸⁸	N/A	N/A	Suckling	Ponytail with 1 front lock	Moon amulet
BM 24652 ¹²⁸⁹	N/A	N/A	Back	Ponytail with 2 front locks	Horn, moon amulet
JE 28554 ¹²⁹⁰	N/A	N/A	N/A	Ponytail with 2 front locks	N/A

¹²⁷⁷ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 150-1, Abb. 14.

¹²⁷⁸ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 148-9, Abb. 8.

¹²⁷⁹ Buden, *Images of Woman and Child*, 143.

¹²⁸⁰ J. Romano, "Figure vase: woman holding a swaddled child," in *Mistress of the house, mistress of heaven: Women in ancient Egypt*, ed. A.K. Capel and G. Marcoe (Cincinnati: Cincinnati Art Museum, 1996), 61-62, Cat. 10b.

¹²⁸¹ Formerly Louvre AF 6. 643. Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 149, Abb. 9-10.

¹²⁸² Desroches Noblecourt, "Pots anthropomorphes," 59, Abb. 1 und 2; Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 149, Abb. 7.

¹²⁸³ Though Brunner-Traut ("Muttermilchkrügel," 147, Abb. 2) listed it as "Berlin no No.," the image for MMA 25.7.42 (Hayes, *Scepter II*, 196-7, fig. 111) appears to be the exact same object.

¹²⁸⁴ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," Abb. 13.

¹²⁸⁵ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," Abb. 1.

¹²⁸⁶ Desroches-Noblecourt, "Pots anthropomorphes," 63ff., Abb. 8-11; Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 150, Abb. 3, 15.

¹²⁸⁷ Desroches-Noblecourt, "Pots anthropomorphes," 51 ff., Abb. 4-7 und Pl. 3,6.; Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 148, Abb. 4.

¹²⁸⁸ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," Abb. 5-6; Buden, *Images of Woman and Child*, fig. 12.

¹²⁸⁹ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," Abb. 11; Robins, *Reflections*, Cat. 39, pl. 15.

¹²⁹⁰ Lilyquist, "Egypt and the Near East," 64, fig. 24

All the vessels depicted the women with heavy wigs, often with a large lock hanging down the back and two tresses falling forward of the shoulder. More recently, Christine Lilyquist had argued that the nursing vessels were either foreign in origin or inspiration, based on the unusual hair and clothing and parallels from northern Cyprus and eastern Mediterranean.¹²⁹¹ However, such a flask type did not occur in Cyprus in the Bronze Age, and the motif did not become popular in the eastern Mediterranean even in the Iron Age.¹²⁹² Likewise, as Brunner-Traut and Bourriau noted,¹²⁹³ these objects had every use, rather than formal contexts, so the conventions of formal art likely did not apply to them.

A number of the vessels portrayed the women wearing a crescent-moon amulet. Brunner-Traut attributed the meaning of the moon amulet as connected to pregnancy, with the ebbing and waning of the phases of the moon likened to swelling.¹²⁹⁴ As we will discuss below, London Spell 25 cited Thoth against miscarriage,¹²⁹⁵ and the occurrence of the baboon, an animal highly associated with Thoth, on apotropaia may indicate the god's role in protection of children.¹²⁹⁶

In two examples, the women held oil horns like those seen in the pregnant woman vessels. As Brunner-Traut noted, prescriptions with mother's milk often included oil as well.¹²⁹⁷ Likewise, Egyptian spells also used oil to smooth aching breasts.¹²⁹⁸

¹²⁹¹ Lilyquist, "Egypt and the Near East," 64.

¹²⁹² Buden, *Images of Woman and Child*, 146, 220, 229-236, 275-6.

¹²⁹³ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 159; Bourriau, "Clay Figure Vases," 101.

¹²⁹⁴ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 158-9, citing Ebers 874 (105,17-109,2) and Berlin Spell 52 (5,1-4).

¹²⁹⁵ See in § 5.2.4.2.

¹²⁹⁶ See § 6.2.8.

¹²⁹⁷ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 161, n. 54, citing Ebers 109, 111, and 836. For the latter, see in § 5.2.4.4.

¹²⁹⁸ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 161, n.55, citing Ebers 810, Berlin 18, and Berlin 13. For the former, see discussion of *gsw* in § 5.2.5.3.

Most scholarship considered these vessels as containers of woman's milk. While Desroches-Noblecourt considered the milk for feeding a possibly ill infant,¹²⁹⁹ Brunner-Traut and others attributed the vessels for the milk of a woman who had given birth to a son,¹³⁰⁰ particularly given the male gender of the infants depicted on them. As discussed above, the ingredient was used in some medical-magical spells due to its association with Isis.¹³⁰¹ Specifically, Brunner-Traut considered the women depicted as nurses.¹³⁰² With their volume, they would have contained enough milk from one breast.¹³⁰³ Additional spells featuring this ingredient include two against burns.¹³⁰⁴ However, given the general lack of context of the vast majority of known examples, assigning one use over the other proves difficult.

Should the vessels be for mother's milk, they would fit a larger pattern of the development of suspected containers of breastmilk. Middle Kingdom spouted cups,¹³⁰⁵ some with apotropaic decoration, shifted to simpler decoration in the New Kingdom while the early New Kingdom saw the appearance of Taweret bottles with pierced breasts.¹³⁰⁶ The mother's milk vessels would thus fit a trend in the New Kingdom to shift away from the Middle Kingdom apotropaia to depictions of human women like in the *Wochenlaube* ostraca and *lit clos*.

3.5.3 Conclusions

Though the two forms of vessels differed in exact function, both served to contain products having therapeutic function, the one are for ointment to use during pregnancy; the other,

¹²⁹⁹ Desroches-Noblecourt, "Pots anthropomorphes," 49-67.

¹³⁰⁰ Spieser, "Femmes et divinités enceintes," 56-7; Robins, *Women in ancient Egypt*, 90-1; Bourriau, "Pottery Figure Vases," 94; Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 161-4.

¹³⁰¹ See above, p. 35 (note 141), 50 (for birth prognosis spells Berlin 193-4), 92 (for Berlin 3027 Spell I), and 94 (association with Isis).

¹³⁰² Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 160.

¹³⁰³ Brunner-Traut, "Muttermilchkrügel," 155; Spieser, "Femmes et divinités enceintes," 56.

¹³⁰⁴ BM E 10059: Desroches-Noblecourt, "Pots anthropomorphes," 57-8, 9 and Buden, *Images of Women*, 144-5, citing BM E 10059 and Ebers 69,3-7.

¹³⁰⁵ See below, §§ 6.4.1-2.

¹³⁰⁶ See above, § 2.5.2, 83.

are fabricated for a base of women's milk.¹³⁰⁷ While the former more clearly belonged to the domain of women, the use of mother's milk had a wider medical-magical function.¹³⁰⁸ Likewise, the latter items did not have archaeological context that defined them as strictly women's items.

3.6 Summary

Figurines of dwarfs from the Middle Kingdom appear to have been a revival of previous Predynastic types. The male dwarfs tended to carry associations with music, pot bearing, and carrying calves, while those from the Obelisk Temple in Byblos tended to have an enlarged penis. Female dwarfs were more explicitly linked to fertility, with many holding a child. Both genders of dwarves seemed to have served as fecundity figures for this period. While excavators found many of these figurines in tombs, the number of dwarf stands from the contemporary townsites of Lahun indicate that the dwarf had significance in the household cults of the Middle Kingdom. With the rise in popularity and more standardized dwarfish appearance of Bes in the New Kingdom, the dwarf figure during this period became less favored in religious imagery.

While nude female figurines lasted from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom and beyond, the evidence suggests there were two currents of development: stylized Middle Kingdom types evolving into those with more idealized bodily features, and nonidealized figurines of women and female genitalia. Some of the Middle Kingdom female figurines, namely Types A1-A2, had close association with dancers linked to Hathor, as seen in the clothing, hairstyles, and tattoos, as well as the context in which these figurines occurred. Consistent with the type of evidence available during this period, Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate

¹³⁰⁷ Brunner-Traut, "Gravidenflasche," 35-48; Spieser, "Femmes et divinités enceintes," 56-57.

¹³⁰⁸ Ibid.

Period figurines often had funerary contexts, with some assemblages from temples outside of Egypt, such as the Temple of Obelisks in Byblos and Gebel Zeit.

In light of the newer research on female figurines and the issues with the original Pinch typology discussed above, an updated typology for nude female figurines, particularly for New Kingdom types, proved necessary. While figurine types differed in specialization, such as the primarily town context of Type C figurines, the available evidence still indicates that the primary function of this object type was to ensure fertility and successful childbirth. The nonidealized types of female figurines and woman-shaped *jeux de la nature* tended to emphasize physical features associated with fertility and birth, namely genitalia, breasts, and pregnant stomachs, in direct contrast to the standard representation of female beauty in much of Egyptian official art, including female figurines made in centralized workshops. The occasional occurrence of female figurines with pottery model beds was particularly noteworthy, especially with the more clearly fertility-related votive beds of the Third Intermediate Period with molded Bes decoration. These later more elaborate beds were clear parallels to the beds in the *Wochenlaube* scenes.¹³⁰⁹

Many of the woman-shaped figured vessels of the New Kingdom were unprovenanced, though their forms are suggestive. For the oil vessels, the pregnant body of Taweret served as the ideal for that condition. In parallel to the contemporary anti-miscarriage spells discussed below,¹³¹⁰ the pregnant woman depicted on the jars often wore a tampon. The milk vessels, in contrast, invoked the idealized female form more familiar in Egyptian art. The representation of children served to indicate the jars as good sources of breastmilk. Despite knowing the contents of these vessels, it remains unclear whether the vessels functioned for feeding children like the

¹³⁰⁹ See below, § 7.4.

¹³¹⁰ See § 5.2.4.2 below.

baby-feeding cups of the late Middle Kingdom¹³¹¹ and/or holding the milk for medical-magical prescriptions involving the milk of a woman who gave birth to a boy.¹³¹²

Most of the material covered in this chapter and previous chapters is figurative: representing gods, demons, animals, and people. Some of the representations of people wore amulets and amuletic jewelry, such as the cowrie shells on female figures. There is uncertainty whether certain on-figural amulets served a role in fertility or birth magic. Some of these amulets, namely cowries and acacia seeds, had a clear archaeological association with women, but not as much textual evidence on their use. In contrast, previous scholarship had cited textual evidence to connect the *tjt*-knot, *psš-kf* and *ntwri*-blades to birth and fertility. These non-figural amulets comprise the focus of the subsequent chapter.

¹³¹¹ See § 6.4.

¹³¹² For this ingredient in medical-magical spells, see below.

Chapter 4: Non-figural Amulets and Devices

4.1 Introduction

In addition to the amulets of deities, scholars had attributed several types of non-figural amulets and devices to the realm of birth and fertility, mainly cowries/cowroids, acacia-seed beads, cylinder “amulet cases”, the *tit*-amulet, and the *psš-kf* knife. While Egyptians clearly associated cowries and acacia-seed beads with concepts of birth and fertility, this connection is less certain for the other types. Examination based on context is thus necessary to ascertain the latter’s functions. Except for actual cowrie shells and acacia seeds, these items predominantly belonged to the domain of the non-royal elite.

4.2 Cowries and cowroids

Cowrie shells, used often in girdles and other amuletic jewelry, first occurred in the Predynastic period. Women’s girdles of strings of beads apparently became frequent during the Middle Kingdom,¹³¹³ in contrast to the Old Kingdom, which produced only one example of a female statuette with a bead belt.¹³¹⁴ Imitations of the shell in precious stones and metals, first appearing in the 6th Dynasty, date primarily to the Middle Kingdom, while more schematic imitations, called cowroids, initially occurred in First Intermediate Period tombs and became more present in the Middle Kingdom. All three types were primarily associated with women. As we will discuss below, while the cowrie shell serves as a fertility amulet, the imitations and cowroids served overlapping yet different functions.

¹³¹³ Golani, “Cowrie shells and their imitations,” 74; Breasted, *Servant* statues, pl. 89, fig. b; Desroches-Noblecourt, “Concubines du mort,” pl. I; Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 80.

¹³¹⁴ Breasted, *Statues*, 95, no. 89b-c.

4.2.1 Cowrie Shells

Cowrie shells first occurred in the Predynastic Period and are common in the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom. Though they appear primarily in tombs, they were most likely used in life. There is unfortunately, no definitive list of cowrie shells, with the closest a small list from Kovács.¹³¹⁵

The cowrie may have represented the shape of the vulva and thus functioned as a fertility amulet,¹³¹⁶ providing protection of reproductive capacity.¹³¹⁷ Thus, in their most common position, as an element of a woman's girdle, they were in exactly the right place to ward off evil from the relevant body part, especially if the wearer was pregnant.¹³¹⁸ With their occurrence in necklaces, cowries may have also functioned "as an amulet against the evil eye,"¹³¹⁹ or rather malevolent forces in general, since they also had a resemblance to eyes.¹³²⁰

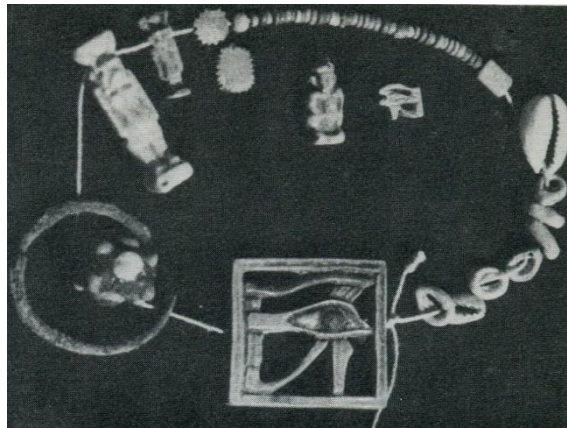


Figure 196 – String with cowries, Saqqara tomb S84.156, NK. Kanawati, *Excavation at Saqqara*, pl. 42.

¹³¹⁵ László Kovács, *Vulvae, eyes, snake heads: archaeological finds of cowrie amulets (BAR 1846)* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2008), 162-172.

¹³¹⁶ Golani, "Cowrie shells and their imitations," 75; Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 81.

¹³¹⁷ W. Seipel, *Gold der Pharaonen: Ausstellungskatalog des Kunsthistorischen Museums Wien* (Vienna: Kunsthistorischen Museums Wien, 2001), 64 no. 59.

¹³¹⁸ Andrews, *Amulets of ancient Egypt*, 42.

¹³¹⁹ Grajetski, *tomb treasures*, 57, no. 46.

¹³²⁰ Stoof, *Kauroid*, 445.

In both the southern Levant and Egypt, cowries were associated with women and children.¹³²¹ For example, the shells appeared in a child burial, the 13th century BCE tomb 120, at Tell el-Saidiyeh.¹³²² Unlike the cowrie imitations,¹³²³ these real cowrie shells tended to occur in burials of lower status women and girls.¹³²⁴ Their incidence in primarily female graves may indicate a purpose of giving life, symbolic rebirth and the afterlife.¹³²⁵ Further evidence of the use of cowries in the Middle Kingdom comes from the fertility figurines, which often wore girdles of cowrie shells.¹³²⁶ This pattern occurred in Type A2¹³²⁷ figurines in faience¹³²⁸ and limestone,¹³²⁹ as well as Type B1¹³³⁰ and B2 figures.¹³³¹ Given their association with fertility, the figurines indicate a related function for the cowrie shells.¹³³²

Versus later periods, the Middle Kingdom (Table 17)¹³³³ had a high percentage of occurrence of cowries in girdles.¹³³⁴ Those cowries dating to the New Kingdom (Table 18), for which excavators can identify the type of jewelry, in contrast, tended to occur as necklaces, strung along with beads and other amulets. During the Middle Kingdom, cowries, as well as nude female figurines, constituted a distinct female-fertility imagery, as opposed to the

¹³²¹ Golani, "Cowrie shells and their imitations," 75.

¹³²² J.B. Pritchard, *The Cemetery at Tell es-Sa'idiyeh, Jordan* [University Museum Monograph 41] (Philadelphia: University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 1980), pl. 25.3.

¹³²³ See § 4.2.2.

¹³²⁴ Stoof, *Kauroid*, 444.

¹³²⁵ Golani, "Cowrie shells and their imitations," 76.

¹³²⁶ For full list of figurines with cowrie shells, see Stoff, *Kauroid*, 427-431.

¹³²⁷ For more information on the figurine typology, see above, § 6.2.1.2.

¹³²⁸ Ex., Berlin ÄM 9586: Breasted, *Servant statues*, 90b; Cairo JE 47710: Saleh, *Catalogue Cairo*, no. 80; BM 52863: Pinch, *Magic*, 126, fig. 65; London UC 16723-4: Petrie, *Objects*, pl. LII 391.

¹³²⁹ Ex., MMA 30.8.198.

¹³³⁰ Ex., Munich ÄS 1559; MMA 30.8.199; Downes, *Esna*, 86 fig. 50, 88 fig. 56, 89 fig. 57.

¹³³¹ Ex., Berlin 187: A. Scharff, *Die archäologischen Ergebnisse des vorgeschichtlichen Gräberfeldes von Abusir el-Meleq* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1926), Taf. 71 (528); Downes, *Esna*, 85 fig. 49, 89 fig. 58.

¹³³² D'Amicone, "Cowrie shells," 65; Stoff, *Kauroid*, 428.

¹³³³ Table abbreviations: Regions - Lower Egypt (LE), Middle Egypt (ME), Upper Egypt (UE), Lower Nubia (LN), general Nubia (N); Context: Child (C), Female (F), Female Child (FC), Male (M), Unknown (U).

¹³³⁴ D'Amicone, "Cowrie shells and peal oysters," 63. For shells of other periods, see E. Feucht, "Muschelschalen," *LÄ IV* (1982): col. 228-230 and Andrews, *Jewelry I*, 19, 25, 29, 35, 37, 47, 61, 83, 91, tables 1-2.

contemporary apotropaic iconography.¹³³⁵ Thus, the placement of cowries on girdles during this period designated them as separate from other amuletic jewelry. In contrast, the New Kingdom saw the rise of a standardized birth iconography, with amulets of birth deities becoming more popular and accessible in daily-life contexts. Consequently, cowries during this period co-occurred with amulets of Bes and Hathor on necklaces as a cohesive whole. The cowries were likewise integrated with other types of amulets on these necklaces, seemingly to cover multiple religious/magical needs of the wearer.

Table 17 - Cowries from Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period Contexts

Region	Site	Date	Specific context	Details	No.	Bibliography
LE	Lisht	12D.		on string	8	MMA 34.1.223
LE	Lisht	12-13D.	Pit 8	on string	7	MMA 34.1.185
LE	Lisht	MK (?)		on string	11	MMA 32.1.211
LE	Lisht	12-13D.	F (Senwosretankh)	on string of beads and two Aha amulets	1	MMA 33.1.42
LE	Saqqara	SIP	3505 (above)	on string of beads and amulets, including 41 of Aha	1	BM EA 68212
F	Lahun	12D.			1	Schilder, "Die Kaurischnecke," 31; Falkner, "Mollusca," 151, note 5
F	Lahun	12D.			1	Schilder, "Die ethnologische Bedeutung," 316; Falkner, "Mollusca," 141
F	Lisht	12D.	FC (Hepy)	Chain	6	MMA 34.1.142
ME	Beni Hasan	MK	61 (2U, F)		1	Garstang, <i>Burial customs</i> , 214, no. 65

¹³³⁵ See Chapter 6 below.

ME	Beni Hasan	MK	61(2M)		2	Garstang, <i>Burial customs</i> , 213, no. 61.
ME	Mostagedda	L.FIP-MK	3136 (F)	between head and knees	1	Brunton, <i>Mostagedda</i> , 117, 131
ME	Mostagedda	MK	10103 (F)	strung on twine		Brunton, <i>Mostagedda</i> , 137
ME	Mostagedda	SIP	Tomb, 3241 (F)	on string with beads and shells	1	BM EA 63299; Andrews, <i>Jewellery I</i> , 637.
ME	Rifeh	SIP		UC 38898	1	UC 38898; Petrie museum website
ME	Sedment	SIP	found in basket	on string	6	UC 28411
UE	Abydos	MK	G62	on string, some backs cut off	8	BM EA 37319; Andrews, <i>Amulets</i> , fig. 45
UE	Abydos	SIP		on string of beads and amulets, including Aha	26	UC43035; Petrie, <i>Tombs of the Courtiers and Oxyrhynchos</i> .
UE	Abydos	L.MK		on necklace	1	UC 42858b; Petrie museum website
UE	Aswan	MK			1	Reisner, <i>Amulets II</i> , 39, pl. X, XXV: no. 12831
UE	Balabish	L.FIP-MK		"Pan-Grave"	1	Jackson, "Shells as evidence," 129
UE	Sheikh Farag	MK	SF 86	on string of beads and amulets, including Taweret amulets	1	MFA 13.3639
LN	Aniba	MK	N580	necklace, man	1	Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , 55, 165, pl. 27a.
LN	Aniba	SIP		fragment of girdle	4	MFA 50.4077; Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , no. 1504.
LN	Aniba	SIP	N505c	Necklace		Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , 55, 158
LN	Aniba	SIP	N545a	perforated, used as pendant	1	Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , 55, 154
LN	Aniba	SIP	N559	Bracelet		Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , 55, 163
LN	Aniba	SIP	N585b	Anklet	9	Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , 55, 165, pl. 29d.
LN	Aniba	SIP	N756b	Girdle	4	Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , 55, 176
LN	Aniba	SIP	N785a	Necklace		Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , 55, 178

LN	Aniba	SIP	N794		2	Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , 55, 179
LN	Aniba	SIP	N824b	Necklace		Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , 55, 181
LN	Aniba	SIP	N920		2	Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , 55, 188
LN	Aniba	SIP	N921	Necklace		Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , 55, 188
LN	Aniba	SIP	N956a	Necklace	2	Steindorff, <i>Aniba I</i> , 55, 191
LN	Semna	12D.	S533		2	MFA 24.3.356d
N	Adindan	MK-SIP	T 254(1)		1	OI E 30231: B.B. Williams, <i>Excavations between Abu Simbel V</i> , 193.
N	Serra East	MK-SIP	B121/1	front cut away	1	OI E 25663

Table 18 – Cowries from New Kingdom Contexts

Region	Site	Date	Context	Details	Number	Bibliography
LE	Memphis	18D.	Town	found with two faience imitations; worked as bead	1	UC 74478. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
LE	Meydum	18D.	Tomb 51	string of beads	5	UC31100. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
LE	Meydum	18D.	Tomb	string of 15 cowries	15	UC31158a-o. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
LE	Meydum	18D.	Tomb	string of beads	1	UC31137. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
LE	Meydum	18D.	Tomb 79	String of beads	2	UC31119. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
LE	Meydum	18D.	Tomb	string of beads	2	UC31148. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
LE	Saqqara	NK	S84.156	String of beads and amulets	8	Kanawati et al., <i>Excavations at Saqqara</i> , 66, pl. 42.
LE	Saqqara	NK	S84:167	String of beads and amulets	1	Kanawati et al., <i>Excavations at Saqqara</i> , 70, pl. 45.

LE	Zawiyet el-Aryan	NK	Tomb, Z/61	on necklace	2	MFA 11.3104. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
LE	Zawiyet el-Aryan	NK	Tomb	with beads	1	MFA 11.2574. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
ME	Rifeh	18D.	Tomb 21	strung with beads	1	Petrie, <i>Gizeh and Rifeh</i> , 23, pl. XXVIIA, bottom right, second from the top.
ME	Mostagedda	SIP-NK	Tomb, unnamed graves	sometimes strung	6	G. Brunton, <i>Mostagedda and the Tasian Culture</i> (1937), 107, 126; Kovacs, <i>Vulvae</i> , 162-172.
ME	Mostagedda	NK	Tomb, Grave 10103	Pierced	34	BM EA 63350. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
ME	Amarna	18D.		hole where back removed	1	UC 68004. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
ME	Matmar	NK	Tomb, Grave 775	on string	4	BM EA 63486. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
ME	Matmar	NK	Tomb, Grave 775		multiple	BM EA 63485. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
ME	Matmar	NK	Tomb, Grave 779	with beads	multiple	BM EA 63492. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
ME	Matmar	NK	Tomb, Grave 775	with beads	1	BM EA 63484. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
ME	Matmar	NK	Tomb, Grave 779	with beads	multiple	BM EA 63493. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
ME	Matmar	NK	Tomb, Grave 779	on necklace	2	BM EA 63489. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
UE	Qau	NK	Tomb	string of beads	1	UC18770; Brunton, <i>Qau and Badari III</i> . XXIII, XXV, p.15
UE	Abydos	18D.	Tomb, D.114			J. Jackson, <i>Shells as evidence of the Migrations of Early Culture</i> (Manchester: University Press, 1917) 128; Kovacs, <i>Vulvae</i> , 162-172.
UE	Abydos	NK			1	UC42953: Frankfort, <i>Cenotaph of Seti at Abydos I</i> .
UE	Abydos	NK	Tomb		1	UC 42964; Frankfort, <i>Cenotaph of Seti at Abydos I</i>

UE	Abydos	18D.		Large hole where back has been removed	1	UC68004. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
UE	Abydos	NK		with beads and amulets	1	UC 35661a. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
UE	Abydos	18D.	Tomb, D 107	on string	2	Philadelphia E9967. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
UE	Mesheikh	NK	Tomb, 2512		2	MFA 12.1430. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
UE	Mesheikh	NK	Tomb, 2511	on necklace	multiple	MFA 12.1417. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
UE	Deir el-Bahari	NK	Temple, shrine to Hathor		1	BM EA 41475; Pinch, <i>Votive Offerings to Hathor</i> , 284.
UE	Deir el-Bahari	NK	Temple, shrine to Hathor		1	BM EA 41474; Pinch, <i>Votive Offerings to Hathor</i> , 285.
UE	Thebes	18D.	Temple, Karnak	Akhenaten temple	3	D. Reese, "The marine and freshwater shells," in <i>The Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages of Central Transjordan: The Baq'ah Valley project 1977-1981</i> , ed. P.E. McGovern et al. (Philadelphia: 1986), 329, no. 14; D. Reese, "Recent invertebrates as votive gifts," in <i>The Egyptian Mining Temple at Timna</i> , ed. B. Rothenberg (London, 1988), 262.
UE	Esna	e.18D.	Grave 163	strung with beads	1	Ashmolean 1933.256: Downes, <i>Esna</i> , tomb list.
UE	Aswan	NK	Tomb, 5		1	Reisner, <i>The archaeological survey of Nubia</i> (1910), Taf. 70m fig. c1; Faulkner 1981, 141, note 7.
UE	Aswan	NK	Tomb	C-Group	1	G. Faulkner, "Part 2: Mollusca." in <i>The Sacred Animal Necropolis at North Saqqara</i> , ed. G.T. Martin (London: 1981), 141, note 7.
LN	Qustul	NK	cemetery	restrung with beads and amulet	1	OI E 20803: B.B. Williams, <i>Excavations between Abu Simbel IX</i> , 352.

LN	Buhen	NK	Tomb, J36	with group of pendants/beads	1	Philadelphia E10280: Randall-MacIver, <i>Buhen</i> , 223.
LN	Semna	18D.	Tomb, S533		2	MFA 24.3.474a, 24.2052.2. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
LN	Semna	18D.	Tomb, S533	split, with conical shell beads	7	MFA 24.3.250a,b. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
LN	Semna	NK	Tomb, 563	on string with beads	7	MFA 24.3.762a-c. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
LN	Semna	NK	Tomb	with Hathor amulet	2	MFA 24.3.786e. Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).
LN	Semna	NK	Tomb, S523	on string with beads and amulets, including Bes and Hathor cow head	1	MFA 24.3.232e (missing). Museum online catalogue (accessed 2/1/2016).

4.2.2 Cowrie Imitations

While actual shells were used in the Predynastic Period, imitations in blue-glazed composition occurred as early as the 6th Dynasty,¹³³⁶ with examples in cornelian and quartz appearing soon thereafter.¹³³⁷ Starting in the Middle Kingdom, imitations of sheet gold, silver, and electrum began to occur.¹³³⁸ Consisting of two parts molded together with a hollow center, these metal cowries often possessed inside small globules, which then generated a sound with every movement.¹³³⁹ When the cowrie shells functioned as buckles on the chains, they were flattened on one side and could be slid into each other to a complete cowrie shell.¹³⁴⁰ From their almost exclusive presence in tombs of women and girls and position on the body, the imitations,

¹³³⁶ Kovács, *Vulvae, eyes, snake heads*, 18, 102-172.

¹³³⁷ Andrews, *Amulets of ancient Egypt*, 42; Golani, "Cowrie shells and their imitations," 76-77.

¹³³⁸ Aldred, *Jewels of the Pharaohs*, pls 19, 31; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 239, fig. 153; Andrews, *Amulets of ancient Egypt*, 42, figs 49g, 69a; Golani, "Cowrie shells and their imitations," 77.

¹³³⁹ Andrews, *Amulets*, 42; Aldred, *Jewels*, no. 22.

¹³⁴⁰ Example for chain with clasp CG 53123; Saleh, *Katalog Kairo*, no. 109; MMA 34.1.154; Seipel, *Gold*, no. 28; Stoof, *Kauroid*, 431-2.

while linked to fertility like the cowries, most likely functioned specifically for rebirth and protection in the afterlife.¹³⁴¹

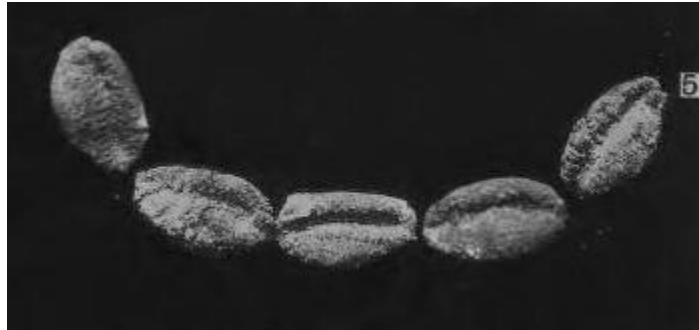


Figure 197 – Cowrie imitations from Harageh, shaft grave 72, MK. Image from Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl.14.5.

As Table 19 demonstrates, these imitations of gold, silver, and electrum hailed from the graves of princesses as well as girls and women also from a socially high standing.¹³⁴²

Excavators found numerous examples in the treasures of Dahshur, Lahun, and Lisht. These imitations, given the materials used, appeared to have far greater value than the original shells.¹³⁴³

When excavators knew either the exact position of imitations on the body and/or the type of jewelry they joined, cowrie imitations were predominantly linked on girdles worn at the hips. The find of UC 7053 in a tuft of hair indicates, however, that such cowrie imitations were not only worn on the hips and neck.¹³⁴⁴ Sometimes, the imitations coincided with other amulets, such as MFA 31.787, where the chain also had pendants with *s3* and *dd*-pillar hieroglyphs. In at least four cases, they joined beads shaped like acacia seeds.¹³⁴⁵

¹³⁴¹ B. Brandl, “A scarab, two seal impressions, and a cowroid,” in *Excavations at Tel Mevorakh (1973-1976) II. The Bronze Age* [= *Onograph Series of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University* 11], ed. E. Stern (Jerusalem: Insitute of Archaeology, Hebrew Univeristy of Jerusalem, 1984), 60-61; Golani, “Cowrie shells and their imitations,” 79.

¹³⁴² Grajetzki, *Tomb treasures*, 43.

¹³⁴³ Golani, “Cowrie shells and their imitations,” 77.

¹³⁴⁴ Stoof, *Kauroid*, 437.

¹³⁴⁵ For more on amulets shaped like acacia beads, see below, § 3.5.4.



Figure 198 – Girdle (MMA 16.1.5) of cowrie imitations strung with imitation acacia-seed beads, from Lahun, Tomb 8 (12th Dynasty). Image from Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, pl. XII.

Table 19 – Cowrie Imitations

Site	Date	Specific context	Owner	Setting	Description	No.
Qau	FIP	Tomb 7923	U	chain ¹³⁴⁶	Gold	12
Naga ed-Deir	11D.	Tomb, N 453b	U	bracelet, left wrist ¹³⁴⁷	faience	1
Abydos	12D.	Tomb E108	F	bead chain ¹³⁴⁸	electrum	10
Abydos	12D.	Tomb 1008	FC	neck ¹³⁴⁹	gold and silver	4
Dahshur	12D.	N Gallery	F	Sit-Hathor ¹³⁵⁰	gold, strung with acacia beads of stone and gold	14
Dahshur	12D.	N Gallery	F	Meret ¹³⁵¹	gold with pellets within; 10 larger (1 clasp), 22 smaller	31

¹³⁴⁶ UC 18092: Brunton, *Qau*, II, pl. LXIV (7th-8th Dyn.).

¹³⁴⁷ MFA 21.978.

¹³⁴⁸ Philadelphia E9195: *PM* V, 65; Silverman, *Searching*, 197, no. 58B.

¹³⁴⁹ Cincinnati 1926.57d: G. E. Markoe, "Woman's burial assemblage," in *Mistress of the house, Mistress of Heaven: Women of Ancient Egypt*, ed. A. K. Capel and G. E. Markoe (Cincinnati: Cincinnati Art Museum, 1996), 84, no. 24d.

¹³⁵⁰ CG 53.136: Morgan, *Dahchour*, pl. XXIII, XXIV; Vernier, *Bijoux*, 351, pl. LXXXVIII.

¹³⁵¹ CG 53.074 and 53.165: Morgan, *Dahchour*, pl. XXIII, XXIV; Aldred, *Jewels*, no. 31; single gold shell: MMA 26.7.1388a.

Dahshur	12D.	Weret II	F	jewelry cache ¹³⁵²	Gold	7
Lahun	12D.	Tomb 8 (Sithathoriunet)	F	box, girdle ¹³⁵³	gold, strung with acacia beads of stone and gold	8
Lisht	12D.	Mastaba W of Senwosretankh, pit 3 (Hepy)	FC	girdle ¹³⁵⁴	gold, small stones within	8
Saqqara	12D.	Tomb 41	FC	hip, chain ¹³⁵⁵	Silver	
Lisht	12-13D.	Tomb, pit 6L.P13 ¹³⁵⁶			Gold	1
Lisht North	l.12-e.13D.	pit 607 ¹³⁵⁷			Gold	1
Beni Hasan	MK	Tomb 287	F	next to goods ¹³⁵⁸	Silver	several
Dahshur	MK	Tomb, Sithathor	F	girdle ¹³⁵⁹	gold, strung with acacia-seed beads	8
Harageh	MK	Shaft grave 72	FC	body ¹³⁶⁰	Silver	1
Harageh	MK	Shaft grave 124	F	girdle ¹³⁶¹	Silver	7
Lisht	MK	plunderers heap		girdle ¹³⁶²	faience	8
Thebes (?)	MK			chain ¹³⁶³	electrum	8
Uronarti	MK	Tomb 3	C	neck ¹³⁶⁴	gold, with pendant of <i>dd</i> between two <i>s3</i> -signs	6
Buhen	l. MK	Tomb, K13		chain ¹³⁶⁵	electrum	2

¹³⁵² Cairo JdE 98787: Arnold, *Pyramid of Senwosret III*, 128, 132.

¹³⁵³ MMA 16.1.5: Aldred, *Jewels*, 116 no. 22; Winlock, *Treasure*, pl. XII.

¹³⁵⁴ MMA 34.1.154: Hayes, *Scepter*, I, 232 fig. 148.

¹³⁵⁵ Firth and Gunn, *Teti Pyramid*, fig. 68.

¹³⁵⁶ MMA 24.1.28.

¹³⁵⁷ MMA 09.180.1200.

¹³⁵⁸ Garstang, *Burial Customs*, 222, no. 287 (VII).

¹³⁵⁹ CG 53123 + CG 53136 (= JE30858); Aldred, *Jewels*, 189, pl. 33.

¹³⁶⁰ Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. XXII. Distribution list says at Edinburgh, but untraceable. Other jewelry from the tomb found in museum website.

¹³⁶¹ MMA 2014.619.30-.36: Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. XV 5.

¹³⁶² MMA 22.1.1279: Specific context and setting from museum website.

¹³⁶³ BM 3077: Andrews, *Amulets*, fig. 69a; Russmann, *Eternal Egypt*, 109 no. 36; Bourriau, *Pharaohs*, no. 154.

¹³⁶⁴ Boston MFA 31.787: Wildung, *Pharaonen*, 83 no. 90.

¹³⁶⁵ Philadelphia E10781E: D. Randall-MacIver, David, and L. C. Woolley, *The Eckley B. Coxe Junior Expedition to Nubia*, v. VII (Philadelphia: University Museum, 1911), 234.

Asasif	12-17D.	Tomb, MMA 840		hip chain ¹³⁶⁶	electrum, with acacia bead	12
Lisht	12-18D.	cemetery ¹³⁶⁷			Agate	1
Abydos	MK-NK	Tomb, E 261 ¹³⁶⁸			silver, terracotta	multiple
Valley of the Kings	18D.	Tomb 55 (Tiye)	F	clasps ¹³⁶⁹	Gold	2
Buhen	NK	Tomb H96	C	neck ¹³⁷⁰	ceramic	3
Tell Basta	NK	pit grave 14 ¹³⁷¹			faience, opposite papyrus plant motif	1

During the New Kingdom, these cowrie imitations evolved into a more schematic shape, often called “wallet beads” (Table 20) in the scholarly literature.¹³⁷² Like the earlier cowrie imitations, these wallet beads belonged to the elite, predominantly women. As some scholars had noted,¹³⁷³ a number of representations of girls and young women depict them wearing wallet-bead girdles, such a relief from Deir el-Bahari illustrating Nefrure,¹³⁷⁴ wooden statuettes, and spoon-handles.¹³⁷⁵ They primarily occurred on chains and necklaces; thus, they seem to have carried the same symbolic association with fertility as the cowrie imitations.¹³⁷⁶ The cowrie imitations thus followed a similar trend towards becoming more associated with necklaces and other amulets as the natural cowries. The representations of wallet beads on other objects, in contrast, signified a

¹³⁶⁶ MMA 13.180.11: Hayes, *Scepter I*, Fig. 153, 239; A. K. Capel, “Woman’s burial assemblage,” in *Mistress of the House*, 84-86, Cat. 25.

¹³⁶⁷ MMA 09.180.2468.

¹³⁶⁸ Philadelphia E9291.

¹³⁶⁹ Swansea Museum SM 1959.3.8: Bosse-Griffiths, “Finds,” 68-69, 101-102, fig. 6.

¹³⁷⁰ Philadelphia E 10327A.3: Randall and MacIver, *Buhen*, 224, pl. 65.

¹³⁷¹ El-Sawi, *Tell Basta*, 18, fig. 27.10.

¹³⁷² Andrews, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 173; C. Lilyquist, *The Tomb of Three Foreign Wives of Tuthmosis III* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2003), 175; Stoof, *Kauroide*, 441; Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 134.

¹³⁷³ Andrews, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 143; Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 134.

¹³⁷⁴ *PM II*, 126 (137).

¹³⁷⁵ Ex: J. Vandier d’Abbadie, *Musée du Louvre Département des Antiquités Égyptiennes - Catalogue des objets de toilette égyptiens* (Paris, 1972), 12-13, notice n° 5.

¹³⁷⁶ Andrews, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 140; Stoof, *Kauroide*, 441.

more conservative focus on the hips for certain religious contexts, presumably to symbolize Hathor. This reason is especially present in the Deir el-Bahari relief showing Nefrure.

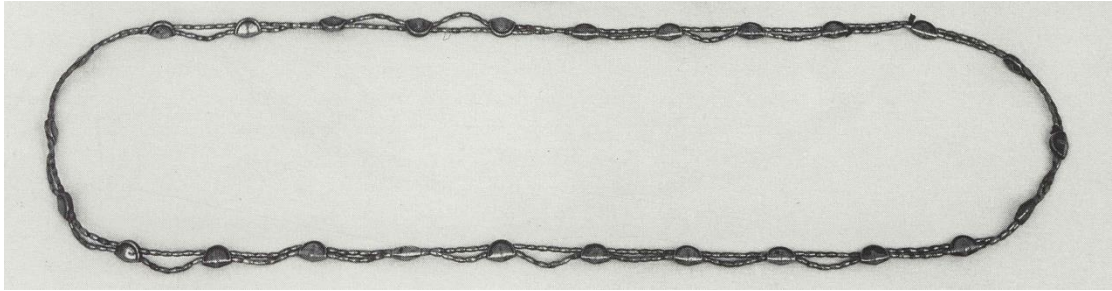


Figure 199 – Edinburgh RMS 1909.443.15 (Sheikh el-Qurna, 17th Dynasty). Image from Andrews, *Ancient Egyptian Jewelry*, fig. 14d.

Table 20 – Wallet Beads

Site	Date	Location	Owner	Context	Material	No.
Amarna ¹³⁷⁷	l.18D.	Estate P 47			gold	1
Asasif ¹³⁷⁸	SIP-e.18D.	Tomb 37, Coffin 83	C	necklace	faience	1
Asasif ¹³⁷⁹	SIP-e.18D.			Chain	silver, faience	18, 8
Deir el-Bahari ¹³⁸⁰	NK				faience	1
Drah abu Neggah ¹³⁸¹	e.18D.	tomb of Aahotep II	F	Chain	gold	17
Esna ¹³⁸²	e.18D.	Tomb 333			feldspar	1
Faras ¹³⁸³	18D.	Temple, Hathor			blue paste	2
Medinet Habu ¹³⁸⁴	NK	Temple			faience	1
Semna ¹³⁸⁵	18D.	tomb S 553			silver	1
Sheikh abd el-Qurna	18D.	TT 8 (Meryt) ¹³⁸⁶	F	Girdle	gold	11

¹³⁷⁷ Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum 21843: Assessed from museum online catalog 7/30/2017.

¹³⁷⁸ Carnarvon and Carter, *Five Years' Excavations*, 86, pl. LXXIII (second row, left).

¹³⁷⁹ MMA 26.7.1377: Assessed from museum online catalog 7/30/2017.

¹³⁸⁰ BM 43194: Assessed from museum online catalog 7/30/2017.

¹³⁸¹ Vernier, *Bijoux*, pl. LXV 52733.

¹³⁸² Downes, *Esna*, 54 "Cowroids 1".

¹³⁸³ Griffith, *Oxford Excavations in Nubia II*, pl. XIX 43, 44.

¹³⁸⁴ Hölscher, *Excavation of Medinet Habu II*, pl. 58: K.9; *ibid.* IV, pl. 29m.

¹³⁸⁵ Dunham, *Second cataract forts I*, 96, fig. 55 (MFA 24.3.519c).

¹³⁸⁶ S. Curto and M. Mancini, "New of Kha' and Meryt," *JEA* 54 (1968): 79, pl. XII 3.

Sheikh abd el-Qurna	l.SIP-e.18D.	Tomb ¹³⁸⁷	F	Girdle	electrum	26
Thebes ¹³⁸⁸	NK				jasper	1
Wadi Qubbanet el-Qirud ¹³⁸⁹	18D.	Wadi D, Tomb 1	F	Girdle	lapis lazuli	1
Wadi Qubbanet el-Qirud ¹³⁹⁰	18D.	Wadi D, Tomb 1	F	Girdle	gold, lapis lazuli	26, 11
Wadi Qubbanet el-Qirud ¹³⁹¹	18D.	Wadi D, Tomb 1	F	Girdle	gold	25
Zawiyet el-Aryan ¹³⁹²	NK	tomb (?)			faience	1

4.2.3 Cowroids

Cowroid amulets, for which Egyptians replaced the usual scarab-form back of seal amulets with a stylized cowrie, occurred from the Middle Kingdom on. People similarly used cowroids in southern Levant at the same time.¹³⁹³ The main distribution for this amulet type is from New Kingdom to the Late Period,¹³⁹⁴ thus following the shift to more abstract imitations of cowries among more elite populations. These objects were usually in semiprecious stones or siliceous materials like faience. Since cowries did not depict the ventral slit of the cowrie, the defining feature of the shell, Golani had doubted that these objects represented cowries.¹³⁹⁵ However, their occurrence on necklaces, girdles, and bracelets with other charms seems to emphasize the amuletic character of the cowroid.¹³⁹⁶ Those found on hands could be used as seals,¹³⁹⁷ so this analysis does not include them. Based on their association with women and

¹³⁸⁷ Edinburgh RSM 1909.527.17: Petrie, *Qurneh*, pl. XXII-XXIX; Grajetzki, *Tomb Treasures*, 164, Abb. 98; Andrews, *Ancient Egyptian Jewelry*, fig. 14d.

¹³⁸⁸ BM 16935: Assessed from museum online catalog 7/30/2017.

¹³⁸⁹ Lilyquist, *Tomb of three foreign wives*, 30, fig. 17g.

¹³⁹⁰ MMA 26.8.60, 58.153.8, 1982.137.5: Lilyquist, *Tomb of three foreign wives*, fig. 167.

¹³⁹¹ MMA 58.153.8, 66.2.3a: Lilyquist, *Tomb of three foreign wives*, fig. 211.

¹³⁹² Boston MFA 11.2581: Assessed from museum online catalog 7/30/2017.

¹³⁹³ Golani, "Cowrie shells and their imitations," 78.

¹³⁹⁴ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 454.

¹³⁹⁵ Golani, "Cowrie shells and their imitations," 78.

¹³⁹⁶ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 452-3.

¹³⁹⁷ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 452.

children, amuletic cowroids likely held similar associations with fertility as cowries and imitations.¹³⁹⁸ Likewise, Stoof had noted the high number of cowroids found in the houses in Amarna, which she had associated with women based on the finds of Bes figures from those same areas.¹³⁹⁹

Cowroids occurred in a wide geographic range of town sites.¹⁴⁰⁰ Excavators found cowroids dating to the Middle Kingdom in Nubia, Upper Egypt, Lahun, and the western Delta region. In the Second Intermediate Period, cowroids predominantly appeared in Syro-Palestinian town sites. Cowroids from the New Kingdom had a notably wide range, occurring in town sites from Nubia, Upper Egypt, Middle Egypt, Lower Egypt, and Syro-Palestine.

The decoration of the seal portion of these objects indicates date, and may reflect age and gender, though there are no motives which occur for only one group. The maze pattern most often occurred with early cowroids (Figure 200), while those from the end of the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period showed often geometric patterns, especially circles and spirals and the *Anra*-group.¹⁴⁰¹ From the New Kingdom, motives tended to be vegetal elements or symbolic signs, while divine and royal names were relatively rare.¹⁴⁰² Perhaps this shift reflected a greater allowance for more clearly religious symbols during this time. Interestingly, the rise in plant elements coincides with the rise of the vegetative birth arbor concept of the *Wochenlaube* ostraca and *lit clos*-altars.¹⁴⁰³

¹³⁹⁸ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 455.

¹³⁹⁹ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 300.

¹⁴⁰⁰ See below, Table 40, in Appendix 2.

¹⁴⁰¹ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 363. The “Anra-group” refers to combinations of ʕ, *n*, and *r* signs.

¹⁴⁰² Stoof, *Kauroide*, 452.

¹⁴⁰³ See below, §§ 7.4-5.

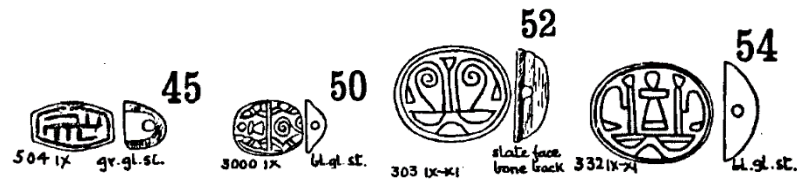


Figure 200 – Cowroids from I.FIP-MK Matmar. Image from Brunton, *Matmar*, pl. XXXIII.

There are only a few cowroids from men's graves, though ones from the late First Intermediate period tend to have a maze pattern or a beetle.¹⁴⁰⁴ In the Middle Kingdom,¹⁴⁰⁵ cowroids for men commonly had plant¹⁴⁰⁶ and spiral motifs.¹⁴⁰⁷ Cowroids from men's graves of the 18th Dynasty tended to exhibit plant motifs¹⁴⁰⁸ and auspicious hieroglyphs,¹⁴⁰⁹ but also motifs which appear already in the Second Intermediate Period such as circle décor¹⁴¹⁰ or the "falcon and angle"¹⁴¹¹ motif.¹⁴¹² The cowroids found in the Hathor temple of Serabit el-Khadim, which predominantly had plant and symbolic-sign decoration, perhaps fit this demographic.¹⁴¹³

In the late First Intermediate/beginning of the Middle Kingdom, cowroids in women's tombs mainly displayed the maze pattern or plant elements, sometimes with individual auspicious hieroglyphs, and rarely other motifs.¹⁴¹⁴ Those from the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period tended to have circles and plant and auspicious sign motifs (Figures 201-2). Such circle designs also predominated the cowroids from contemporaneous Temple of Obelisks

¹⁴⁰⁴ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 402. For the former, see e.g. Ashmolean Museum 1924.338. An example of the latter is A. Vila, *Le Cimetière kernaïque d'Ukma Ouest* (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1987), pl. VII + VIII 226/14.

¹⁴⁰⁵ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 402.

¹⁴⁰⁶ UC 61478.

¹⁴⁰⁷ Munich ÄS 3064.

¹⁴⁰⁸ Ex: Emery and Kirwan, *Wadi es-Sebua I*, 323 fig. 319, 527, pl. 32 no. 102; Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. XEw6.

¹⁴⁰⁹ Bourriau and Millard, "Sawama," *JEA* 57 (1971): 35, fig. 7, no. 3; Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. Co36.

¹⁴¹⁰ Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. XDo1.

¹⁴¹¹ Manchester 6998.

¹⁴¹² Stoof, *Kauroide*, 403.

¹⁴¹³ See Stoof, *Kauroide*.

¹⁴¹⁴ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 399. For the maze pattern, see e.g. London UC20871, Oxford AM 1924.337, Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. Ps1 (Brunton, *Matmar*, pl. XXXIII 48; Wiese, *Anfänge*, Taf. 61 No. 1259); for plants, London UC 18126, UC 20897; for hieroglyphs, Cairo CG 4743; for geometric motif, London UC 20888.

at Byblos.¹⁴¹⁵ The largest group of cowroids from women's graves date to the New Kingdom, especially the 18th Dynasty (Figure 203).¹⁴¹⁶ Common decorations included names or symbols of deities,¹⁴¹⁷ the name of queen Tiye,¹⁴¹⁸ animal motifs,¹⁴¹⁹ plants,¹⁴²⁰ symbolic hieroglyphs,¹⁴²¹ and geometric motifs,¹⁴²² as well as those without decoration on the back.¹⁴²³ Interestingly, Stoof noted that the cowroids found at Deir el-Bahari tended to have designs associated with women in the New Kingdom,¹⁴²⁴ fitting a theme of vitality, fertility and regeneration fitting for objects donated to Hathor.

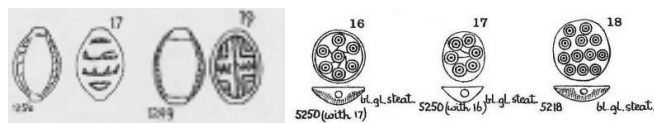


Figure 201 (left) – SIP cowroids from women's tombs in Sedment. Petrie, *Sedment I*, pl. XLIII.17, 19.

Figure 202 (right) – SIP cowroids from women's tombs in Qau. Brunton, *Qau III*, pl. IV.16-18.

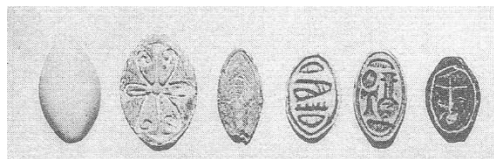


Figure 203 – NK cowroids from women's tombs in Thebes. Image from Carnarvon and Carter, *Five Years' Excavations*, pl. LXXII.1-6.

Cowroids from children's graves were broadly comparable with those from women's tombs.¹⁴²⁵ In the late First Intermediate Period and Middle Kingdom, these objects exhibited

¹⁴¹⁵ See Appendix 2.

¹⁴¹⁶ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 400.

¹⁴¹⁷ Amun: Stoof, *Kauroide*, XEs3; Buto: Stoof, *Kauroide*, Ma16; winged snakes: Stoof, *Kauroide*, Db5; Horus falcon: Stoof, *Kauroide*, Ma4*-1.

¹⁴¹⁸ Stoof, *Kauroide*, Lv25.

¹⁴¹⁹ Fish: Stoof, *Kauroide*, Nb3

¹⁴²⁰ *hs*-vase: Stoof, *Kauroide*, Ma4+Ma4*.

¹⁴²¹ *ꜥnh*: Stoof, *Kauroide*, Nb2; Maat: Stoof, *Kauroide*, Co2; *wꜥꜥt*: Stoof, *Kauroide*, XSe2.

¹⁴²² Double spirals with buds: Stoof, *Kauroide*, Ma4*-2

¹⁴²³ Stoof, *Kauroide*, Be61, Dh1.

¹⁴²⁴ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 316-9.

¹⁴²⁵ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 401.

mainly the maze pattern and papyrus plants with spirals.¹⁴²⁶ For the late Middle Kingdom until early 18th Dynasty (Figure 204), the head of Hathor,¹⁴²⁷ Anra-motif,¹⁴²⁸ auspicious hieroglyphs,¹⁴²⁹ and geometric patterns most commonly occur.¹⁴³⁰ As with women's tombs, cowroids from children's tombs primarily date to the 18th Dynasty.¹⁴³¹ New Kingdom decorations (Figure 205) on cowroids for children include deities,¹⁴³² animals,¹⁴³³ plants,¹⁴³⁴ and geometric patterns such as spirals¹⁴³⁵ and crosses.¹⁴³⁶



Figure 204 (left) – SIP cowroids from children's tombs in Qau. Brunton, *Qau* III, pl. XIX.12, 48, 57.

Figure 205 (right) – NK cowroids from children's tombs in Lahun. Petrie, *IKG*, XVII.1, 33, 37, 39.

There are also regional trends for cowroids. While those from domestic sites in the Delta date from the Second Intermediate Period to the Late Period and include decorations of plants, pseudonyms, symbolic signs, and the names of Thutmose III and Ahmose Nefertari, those from the Fayum tended to have plant elements and cowroids from the Theban palace of Malkata had symbolic signs and the names of Amenhotep III and Tiye.¹⁴³⁷ From the houses of Amarna, where the largest number of cowroids from domestic sites were found, popular motifs were crosses and

¹⁴²⁶ For the maze pattern, e.g. a cowroid from the Reading Museum (Brunton, *Qau* I, 34, pl. XXXIV 211; Wiese, *Anfänge*, Taf. 61 No. 1255), for papyrus plants with spirals e.g. Munich ÄS 3062.

¹⁴²⁷ E.g. Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. XBq1: Brunton, *Qau* III, pl. XIX 48.

¹⁴²⁸ E.g. Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. XBq2: Brunton, *Qau* III, pl. XIX 57; Ben-Tor, *Scarabs*, pl. 35 No. 37.

¹⁴²⁹ E.g. two cowroids from Cairo JdE 48238-65 (Brunton, *Qau* III, 8, pl. XIX 11-12).

¹⁴³⁰ E.g. circles in Vienna A 1373, cross-motif in Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. Re2 (Petrie and Brunton, *Sedment* I, pl. XLIII 19).

¹⁴³¹ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 401.

¹⁴³² Amun-Re (BM 62543); Hathor head (Downes, *Esna*, 66, 355/18; Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. XDw15.)

¹⁴³³ fish (Vercoutter, *Mirgissa* II, 391 fig. 37.3; Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. XVm4.); scorpion (Vercoutter, *Mirgissa* II, 404 fig. 43 left; Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. XVm6.); snake-flower-motif (Emery and Kirwan, *Wadi es-Sebua* I, 137 fig. 124.2, 521, pl. 32 no. 39; Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. XEw4.)

¹⁴³⁴ Brunton and Engelbach, *Gurob*, pl. XL 30; Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. Sh2; Cairo JdE 52943-5.

¹⁴³⁵ Berlin ÄM 23347; Brunton and Engelbach, *Gurob*, pl. XLI 92; Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. Me5; Brunton and Engelbach, *Gurob*, pl. XLI 91; Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. Ma32.

¹⁴³⁶ Oxford AM 1890c.

¹⁴³⁷ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 315.

single symbolic hieroglyphs like *ḥfr*, the Maat-feather, and the *ḥh*. Similar to Malkata, the cowroids found at the Hathor temple at Faras commonly had royal names inscribed on them.¹⁴³⁸ Cowroids from sites in Nubia mainly occurred in tombs of the New Kingdom and Late Period.¹⁴³⁹ In the area of Palestine / Syria, while the graves are generally harder to date due to reuse and multiple burials,¹⁴⁴⁰ cowroids had motifs dating to the Second Intermediate Period¹⁴⁴¹ and New Kingdom.¹⁴⁴² The same dating fits the significant number of cowroids in Syro-Palestine from settlement contexts.¹⁴⁴³

Of the amuletic cowroids from the Middle Kingdom through Second Intermediate Period, excavators recorded their position on a body in twenty-two cases. Bracelets predominate (45.5%), followed by necklaces (27.3%), then girdles and general beads chains (13.6% each). For the New Kingdom, where excavators were able to record a cowroid's position on a person's body, necklaces were most common (53.6%), followed by girdles (21.4%) and bracelets (7.1%).¹⁴⁴⁴ Cowroids were thus more integrated with other types of amulets earlier on, in contrast to other cowrie imitations and natural cowries.

Interestingly, it was primarily women and children who wore bracelets with cowroids,¹⁴⁴⁵ indicating that these cowroids retained amuletic significance most relevant for these demographics. While it is not always clear if a cowroid found in the area of a hand was originally worn on a bracelet or as a ring, certain trends can provide more information, such as longer threads indicating a wrist placement.¹⁴⁴⁶ When cowroids were found with beads, amulets, and

¹⁴³⁸ See Stoof, *Kauroide*.

¹⁴³⁹ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 455.

¹⁴⁴⁰ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 452.

¹⁴⁴¹ Ex: *Anra*-group, pseudo cartouches, central entanglement, goddess head.

¹⁴⁴² Popular motifs vegetal elements and symbolic hieroglyphs, plus names of Amenhotep III and Ramses II.

¹⁴⁴³ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 315-6.

¹⁴⁴⁴ Around 14.3% were recorded as either on the wrist or the waist. For details, see Appendix 2.

¹⁴⁴⁵ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 393.

¹⁴⁴⁶ Stoof, *Kauroide*, 392.

scarabs in the area of the wrists, particularly of women and children,¹⁴⁴⁷ they more likely belong formerly on a bracelet.¹⁴⁴⁸ Sometimes excavators recorded the cowroids as located "at the wrists or waist", which can be impossible to make a distinction if the hands were close to the waist, though the relatively large number of seal amulets can indicate either several bracelets or a girdle.¹⁴⁴⁹

4.2.4 Conclusions

With their association with Hathor, "Mistress of the Vulva," cowries and related imitations were connected with notions of female fertility. Archaeological evidence supports this connection, given the occurrence of these objects in the tombs of women and children, as well as domestic contexts. As discussed above, nude female figurines of types A2 and B, and plaque figurines commonly had cowrie girdles.¹⁴⁵⁰ Likewise, some type C, E, and F figurines also wore cowrie belts.¹⁴⁵¹ The spread of actual cowries of the Middle Kingdom in non-elite contexts indicate that these objects belonged to the female fertility/Hathor set of birth material, as opposed to the apotropaia and dancer figurines used by contemporary elites. In the New Kingdom, real cowries, while still nonelite objects associated with Hathor and female fertility, took on a more amuletic character, being more often strung on necklaces. Stone and faience reproductions of the elite, in contrast, were more subject to shifts in style, with the more direct imitations giving way to the more stylized wallet beads and cowroids.

¹⁴⁴⁷ Women: Berlin ÄM 18659, Bolton 1932.25.18, Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. Wi33 and Wi34 (Brunton, Mostagedda, pl. LXIX 55 and 58), Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. Lv25. Children: two from Ukma-West (Vila, *Ukma Ouest*, 264, pl. V-VI 5/6; 149-150; pl. VII-VIII 189/18), Stoof, *Kauroide*, Cat. XVm4.

¹⁴⁴⁸ Stoof, *Kauroid*, 392-3.

¹⁴⁴⁹ Stoof, *Kauroid*, 393.

¹⁴⁵⁰ See above, §§ 3.2.1, 3.2.2, and 3.2.8.

¹⁴⁵¹ Type C: Hall, "The Smaller Objects," pl. 24.2; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, pl. 49b; Type E: Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, pl. XLV.1 (bottom row, first two to the left); Type F: Brunton, *Gurob*, pl. XIII.6.

Jewelry items with cowrie imitations sometimes also had imitation acacia-seed beads. Interestingly, both these materials were inspired by natural counterparts, and first became more prevalent in the Middle Kingdom. Both types showed continuity from the Middle Kingdom to the New Kingdom, though acacia imitations ceased by the end of the mid-18th Dynasty.

4.3 Acacia Seeds

Along with cowries and their imitations, girdles of both the Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom displayed lenticular beads with a spouted stringing hole, resembling acacia seeds.¹⁴⁵² These were made of lapis lazuli, cornelian, turquoise, feldspar, glass, and hollow gold.¹⁴⁵³ Such acacia beads (Cairo CG 53.123, 53.146, and 53.131) also occurred with Sit-Hathor's cowrie imitation girdle (CG 53.136 and ASAE 1933, 137).¹⁴⁵⁴ Sit-Hathor likewise had another cowrie imitation girdle with acacia beads (CG 53.123). It should also be noted that acacia-seed shaped stone beads sometimes occurred in this period on their own girdles, like that of Senebtisi.¹⁴⁵⁵ Girdles with acacia-seed beads were found in other sites including Harageh,¹⁴⁵⁶ Saqqara,¹⁴⁵⁷ and Lisht.¹⁴⁵⁸ As we will discuss below, Egyptians thought acacia seeds may had beneficial properties for childbirth.¹⁴⁵⁹ In addition, the construction of Amenemhat's "birth shrine" in acacia-wood may also relate to this function.¹⁴⁶⁰ Given their contexts (Table 21), they are objects very much associated with royal and other elite women, though use of actual seeds among nonelite women is possible.

¹⁴⁵² Andrews, *Amulets of Ancient Egypt*, 43.

¹⁴⁵³ Andrews, *Amulets of Ancient Egypt*, 43.

¹⁴⁵⁴ Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 80.

¹⁴⁵⁵ A.C. Mace and H.E. Winlock, *The tomb of Senebtisi at Lisht, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Egyptian Expedition* (New York 1916), 68, pl. xxiii.

¹⁴⁵⁶ Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. liii.

¹⁴⁵⁷ C.M. Firth and B. Gunn, *Teti pyramid cemeteries: Excavations at Saqqara* (Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, 2 vols, Cairo, 1926), pl. 37.

¹⁴⁵⁸ JE 63897; CG 52.766; Hayes, *Scepter I*, fig. 153.

¹⁴⁵⁹ See in § 5.2.4.4.1.

¹⁴⁶⁰ For this structure, see below, § 7.3.1.

The acacia-seed beads were a predominantly Middle Kingdom type of object, likely because of its placement on girdles. As we have discussed above, fertility amulets like cowries occurred more frequently on necklaces in the New Kingdom along with other amulets. In contrast to the fertility cowries, the acacia appeared to have been more specific to recovery and bleeding prevention shortly after birth, so that function may explain its connection to the pubic region.

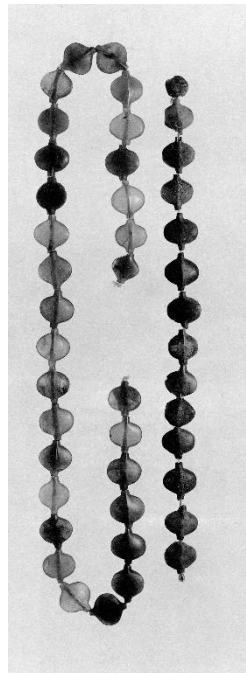


Figure 206 - Carnelian acacia-shaped beads from Thebes, NK. Lilyquist, *Tomb of three foreign wives*, fig. 185.

Table 21 - Excavated Acacia-Seed Beads

Site	Context	Details	Date	Museum
Dahshur	Khnemet ¹⁴⁶¹	beads of gold, carnelian, lapis lazuli, and turquoise	MK	Cairo CG 52898, 52869
Dahshur	Sit-Hathor	beads of gold, lapis lazuli, carnelian, and green feldspar	MK	CG 53123 ¹⁴⁶²

¹⁴⁶¹ Morgan, *Fouilles des Dahshur*, v. II, pl. VII, VIII, 5; Aldred, *Jewels*, pl. 31.

¹⁴⁶² Morgan, *Fouilles des Dahshur*, v. I, pl. XVIII; Aldred, *Jewels of the Pharaohs*, pl. 33.

Dahshur	Sit-Hathor	two gold, one carnelian	MK	MMA 26.7.1316-7 ¹⁴⁶³
Saqqara	Burial 41	carnelian, lapis lazuli, green felspar	MK	Cairo CG 52751 ¹⁴⁶⁴
Lahun	Sit-Hathor-Iunet	gold, carnelian, and green felspar, strung with gold cowries	MK	MMA 16.1.5 ¹⁴⁶⁵
Lisht	Pit 884	Three carnelian and five lapis lazuli	MK	MMA 22.1.126 ¹⁴⁶⁶
Lisht	Senebtisi	gold, carnelian, lapis lazuli, green felspar	MK	MMA 07.227.13 ¹⁴⁶⁷
Lisht	Cemetery	Steatite acacia-shaped bead	MK-e.NK	MMA 09.180.2473 ¹⁴⁶⁸
Lisht	Cemetery, debris	Beryl acacia-shaped bead	MK-e.NK	MMA 09.180.2474 ¹⁴⁶⁹
Harageh	Tomb 72	Lapis lazuli bead; now strung with other beads	MK	Edinburgh RSM 1914.1093 ¹⁴⁷⁰
Qau	Cemetery	no. 4201; gold, reused in 18D.	MK	No Number ¹⁴⁷¹
Deir el-Bahari	Tomb of Henettawy	Bracelet with one gold acacia-shaped bead	1.21D.	MMA 25.3.190e ¹⁴⁷²
Thebes	Wadi Qubbanet el-Qirud, tomb of foreign wives of Tuthmosis III	30 carnelian acacia-shaped beads	18D.	MMA 26.8.118d, 2 from 1982.137.4, six from 1988.25.1, and 1988.25.2 ¹⁴⁷³
Thebes	Wadi Qubbanet el-Qirud, tomb of foreign wives of Tuthmosis III	14 turquoise glass beads	18D.	MMA 26.8.118e (9), incorporating some 1982.137.4 (four), unaccessioned 58.153 (one-half a bead) ¹⁴⁷⁴

¹⁴⁶³ H.E. Winlock, "Elements from the Dahshur jewelry," *ASAE* 33 (1933): 137, Cat. B; Andrews, *Jewellery I*, 95.

¹⁴⁶⁴ Firth and Gunn, *Teti Pyramid Cemetery*, pl. 37A1; Vilímcová, *Egyptian Jewellery*, pl. 21a.

¹⁴⁶⁵ Vilímcová, *Egyptian Jewellery*, pl. XII; Aldred, *Jewels*, pl. 35.

¹⁴⁶⁶ Andrew, *Jewellery I*, 95.

¹⁴⁶⁷ Mace and Winlock, *Senebtisi*, 68, 1b, pl. XXIII; Andrews, *Jewellery I*, 95.

¹⁴⁶⁸ Hayes, *Scepter II*, 13; Andrews, *Jewellery I*, 95; Andrews, *Jewellery I*, 95.

¹⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷⁰ Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. LIII, 75F; Andrews, *Jewellery I*, 95.

¹⁴⁷¹ Brunton, *Qau and Badari III*, pl. IV, 75L2 (Brunton's axle-barrels); Andrews, *Jewellery I*, 95.

¹⁴⁷² D. Aston, *Burial Assemblages of Dynasty 21–25: Chronology – Typology – Developments* [Contributions to the chronology of the Eastern Mediterranean, vol. 21, Denkschriften der Gesamtakademie, 56] (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 199.

¹⁴⁷³ Lilyquist, *Tomb of three foreign wives*, 184 no. 151, Fig. 911, Fig. 185 (left), and Fig. 232 (sixth from the top).

¹⁴⁷⁴ Lilyquist, *Tomb of three foreign wives*, 184 no. 152, Fig. 185 (Right), and Fig. 232 (Fifth from the top).

4.4 Cylinder Beads/Amulet Cases

Also associated with women, one of the characteristic amulets of the Middle Kingdom were the cylindrical amulets, which range from 3.3 cm to 6.8 cm long.¹⁴⁷⁵ Each end had a removable conical cap, with the upper one with a *s3*-loop for suspension around the neck.¹⁴⁷⁶ Although Williams had tried to date the cylinder from el Arabah to later under the assumption that the form would have continued until the New Kingdom,¹⁴⁷⁷ this amulet type did not appear to have continued past the Middle Kingdom. These cylindrical amulets could be generally divided into two types (Tables 22 and 23):¹⁴⁷⁸ an all-metal type (Type 1) and a solid type (Type 2) of stones and metal. These metal amulets, which were mostly in gold and sometimes in silver, ranged in decoration from a granulated pattern (Style A), granulation down the entire case (Style B), and a rope-braid pattern (Style C). For the solid type, I further divided them into two styles, stones threaded on a wire (Style A), and single stone beads with metal caps (Style B). Common stones for Type 2 Style A cylinders were amethyst, carnelian, green feldspar, lapis lazuli, turquoise, or glazed composition. The solid type seems to have been a dummy version of the metal cases.¹⁴⁷⁹ These pendants mainly occurred in the tombs of women.¹⁴⁸⁰

¹⁴⁷⁵ Ogden, "Cylindrical amulet cases," 231; Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 55.

¹⁴⁷⁶ Andrews, *Amulets of ancient Egypt*, 42.

¹⁴⁷⁷ C. R. Williams, *Gold and Silver Jewelry and Related Objects* (N.Y.: New York Historical Society, 1924), 49-50, n.3.

¹⁴⁷⁸ Derived from Andrews, *Jewellery* I, 92, with my edits noted.

¹⁴⁷⁹ Andrews, *Amulets of ancient Egypt*, 42; Petrie, *Diospolis Parva*, 43.

¹⁴⁸⁰ For example, Garstang, *Burial Customs*, fig.104-5; Morgan, *Fouilles à Dahchour*, I, 70, no. 56, pl. XIX.

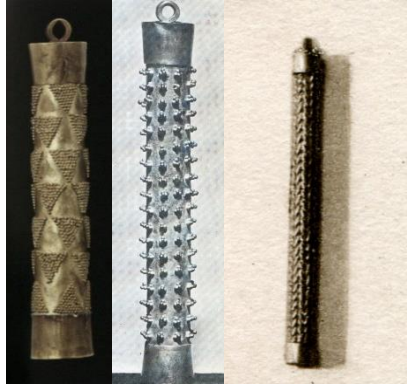


Figure 207 (left) – Cylinder amulet of Type 1A, UC 6482. Image from Quirke, “Cylindrical pendant,” Cat. 138.
Figure 208 (middle) – Cylinder amulet of Type 1B, Brooklyn 59.199.1. Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewelry*, pl. 1e.
Figure 209 (right) – Cylinder amulet of Type 1C, CG 53139. Image from Morgan, *Fouilles a Dahchour I*, pl. XVII.17.

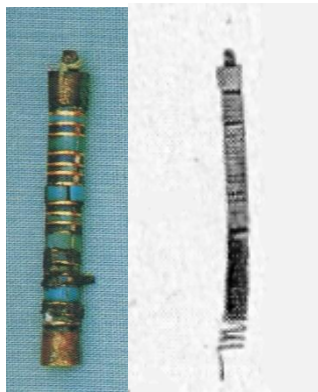


Figure 210 (left) – Cylinder amulet of Type 2A, CG 53072. Image from Aldred, *Jewels of Ancient Egypt*, pl. 46(left).
Figure 211 (right) – Cylinder amulet of Type 2B, Ashmolean 1912.525. Image from Naville, *Abydos III*, pl. IX.2.

Like granulation, the cylindrical cases could have been Asiatic in origin,¹⁴⁸¹ since excavators found a very similar hollow cylinder of gold with triangular granulation decoration in Alalakh.¹⁴⁸² Excavators found hollow gold cylindrical pendants of Phoenician origin in

¹⁴⁸¹ Ogden, “Cylindrical amulet cases,” 232.

¹⁴⁸² BM 125984. M. Hyslop, *Western Asiatic Jewellery c. 3000-612 B.C.E.* (London: Methuen and Co., 1971), pl. 100.

Thanos.¹⁴⁸³ Gauckler had noted that these pendants “seem usually to have contained inscribed plates of metal.”¹⁴⁸⁴

While most of the Type 1 cylinders were empty, the few with contents suggest that the cylinders normally served as containers.¹⁴⁸⁵ At least three such cylinders contained loose garnets, while two others held copper fragments. Although a number of scholars had asserted that some Type 1 cylindrical amulets contained papyrus, the evidence is rather weak. For example, Garstang had stated that UC 6482 (Figure 207) contained a roll of papyrus,¹⁴⁸⁶ but later tests in the Cairo Museum of the decayed organic material found within were inconclusive.¹⁴⁸⁷ Similarly, Garstang had claimed an electrum case from el-Arabah had a small papyrus roll,¹⁴⁸⁸ only for later examination to find just dried clay.¹⁴⁸⁹ Tests in the Cairo Museum¹⁴⁹⁰ also disproved Garstang’s statement that an amulet case he had found at Beni Hasan¹⁴⁹¹ contained papyrus.

Most scholars had equated the cylinder amulet cases with the amulet cases from the Third Intermediate Period, assuming that the former would have contained strips of papyrus with spells like the latter.¹⁴⁹² Ogden had stated that the only real difference between the Third Intermediate Period cases and those of the Middle Kingdom was appearance, which he attributed to their

¹⁴⁸³ F. H. Marshall, *Catalogue of Jewellery, Greek, Etruscan, and Roman, from the departments of antiquities, British Museum* (London: British Museum Trustees, 1911), no. 1556-9.

¹⁴⁸⁴ P. Gauckler, “Note sur des étuis puniques à lamelles gravées, en métal précieux,” *CRAIBL* 44.2 (1900): 195ff.

¹⁴⁸⁵ Ogden, “Cylindrical amulet cases,” 231.

¹⁴⁸⁶ Garstang, *Burial customs*, 113.

¹⁴⁸⁷ Janssen and Janssen, “A cylindrical amulet case,” 160; Williams, *Gold and Silver Jewelry*, 50 and n.7.

¹⁴⁸⁸ Garstang, *El Arābah*, 4, pl. 29. Now Philadelphia E 9198.


¹⁴⁸⁹ Williams, *Gold and Silver Jewelry*, 50.

¹⁴⁹⁰ Janssen and Janssen, “A cylindrical amulet case,” 163.

¹⁴⁹¹ Garstang, *Beni Hasan*, 113. Now Cairo CG 52807.

¹⁴⁹² Aldred, *Jewels of the Pharaohs*, 196-7; Andrews, *Amulets of ancient Egypt*, 42; Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 148; Janssen and Janssen, *Growing up in ancient Egypt*, 22; Leclant, “Porte-amulettes Egyptiens et Puniques,” 105; Petrie, *Amulets*, 29 and pl. 19; Ogden, “Cylindrical amulet cases,” 231-3; Ogden, “An additional note on ‘cylindrical amulet cases’,” 258-259; J. Ray, “Two inscribed objects in the Fitzwilliam Museum,” *JEA* 58 (1972): 251-3; Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 57.

chronological disparity.¹⁴⁹³ However, the theory that the Middle Kingdom cylinder amulets were related to the Third Intermediate Period cases is in dispute. Besides the difference in appearance, there was also an extensive time-gap between the groups, covering the entire New Kingdom.¹⁴⁹⁴ Given the lack of evidence for Middle Kingdom cylinders containing strips of papyrus, the theory does not adequately address the evidence.

Certain scholars had attempted to equate these cylindrical cases with the “seal” mentioned in post-birth protective spells P-T in Papyrus Berlin 3027.¹⁴⁹⁵ However, the word *htm*  is usually translated as “seal”, rather than “cylinder” and the context of the spell indicates that this seal was strung along with other amulets, rather than functioning as an amulet case.¹⁴⁹⁶ Interestingly, the presence of the balls of carnelian in this spell could explain the function of the garnets in the amulet cases.¹⁴⁹⁷

Based on their association with women and the use of materials, such as garnet, the cylindrical amulets most likely related to fertility in general. With almost no exceptions, those objects with context occurred in women’s tombs. While Engelbach asserted that UC 6482 came from the tomb of a man,¹⁴⁹⁸ that assignment is in doubt. First, there is no mention of the object in the tomb cards. Tomb 211 included skeletal remains of a man, though establishing sex has become more complicated now.¹⁴⁹⁹ It is thus entirely possible that the sexing of the bones from 211 in Harageh was incorrect.¹⁵⁰⁰

¹⁴⁹³ Ogden, “Cylindrical amulet cases,” 231.

¹⁴⁹⁴ Janssen and Janssen, “A Cylindrical amulet case,” 162.

¹⁴⁹⁵ Williams, *Gold and Silver Jewelry*, 52-3, discussing Spell R. See below in § 5.2.4.4.

¹⁴⁹⁶ Janssen and Janssen, “A Cylindrical amulet case,” 163.

¹⁴⁹⁷ Janssen and Janssen, “A Cylindrical amulet case,” 163.

¹⁴⁹⁸ Engelbach, *Harageh*, 16.

¹⁴⁹⁹ Cf. F. W. Rösing, “Wirtschaftliche und gesellschaftliche Entwicklung im Übergang vom Alten zum Mittleren Reich: Über den Menschen selbst als Geschichtsquelle,” in *Problems and Priorities in Egyptian Archaeology* ed. J. Assmann et al. (London; New York: KPI, 1987), 142.

¹⁵⁰⁰ Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 148.

The other main piece of evidence for the function of cylinder amulets is the usage of certain stones, both in the Type 2 amulets and the material found in some of the Type 1 objects. Egyptians preferred the green variety of turquoise for the color's association with new vegetation, crops, and fertility.¹⁵⁰¹ While garnets themselves may have unclear symbolism,¹⁵⁰² Egyptians likely used them for their red color, as is the case for other red stones. One probable association for these red stones in or on the cylinders is that of the sun, which was often depicted in red.¹⁵⁰³ The red color here could also represent blood, particularly feminine blood such as the "blood of Isis" amulets,¹⁵⁰⁴ which spell 156 of the Book of the Dead specified would be in carnelian or red jasper.¹⁵⁰⁵ A similar association with the color red may also be present for the *tjt*-amulet.

Table 22 - Type 1 Cylindrical Amulets

Style	Object	Location	Context	Date	Material	Contents
A	Cairo, CG 53071 ¹⁵⁰⁶	Dahshur	tomb (Meret)	MK	gold	
A	Brooklyn 37.701E ¹⁵⁰⁷	Saqqara	tomb	MK	gold	two garnets
A	UC 6482 ¹⁵⁰⁸	Harageh	tomb 211	MK	gold	2 copper alloy beads, remains of another

¹⁵⁰¹ Andrews, *Amulets of ancient Egypt*, 103.

¹⁵⁰² Andrews, *Amulets of ancient Egypt*, 42.

¹⁵⁰³ J. Gwyn Griffiths, "The symbolism of red in Egyptian religion," in *Atlantis and Egypt with other selected essays*, ed. J. Gwyn Griffiths (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1991), 85; H. Kees, "Farbensymbolik in ägyptischen religiösen Texten," *NAWG* 11 (1943): 435ff.; G. Posener, *Dictionnaire de la civilization égyptienne* (Paris: Ferdinand Hazan, 1959), 240; E. Otto, *Egyptian Art and the Cults of Osiris and Amon* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1967), pl. 5, pp. 32; pl. 6, pp. p. 48; pl. 7, pp. 52 (the sun-disks on uraei; but that on the head of Isis is yellow); pl. 8, p. 54; pl. 12, p. 102; pl. 14, pl. 15; V. Ions, *Egyptian Mythology* (London: Hamlyn, 1982), 49 and 52; C. Desroches-Noblecourt and S. Donadoni, *La Vallée des Rois en Egypte: Tombeau de Sethi Ier* (Paris; Milan: Hachette, Fabbri et Skira, 1969), 31.

¹⁵⁰⁴ Griffiths, "The symbolism of red," 85-86; Posener, *Dictionnaire*, 10; Desroches-Noblecourt and Donadoni, *Tombeau de Sethi Ier*, 39 show red and green with white in the pendants attached to flag poles.

¹⁵⁰⁵ Bonnet, *Reallexikon*, 333; T.G. Allen, *The Book of the Dead or Going Forth by Day* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), Spell 156.

¹⁵⁰⁶ Morgan, *Fouilles à Dahchour*, I, 70, no. 55, pl. XXIV; Aldred, *Jewels*, pl. 46, right.

¹⁵⁰⁷ Williams, *Gold and Silver Jewelry*, 47-50, pl. 1a-b.

¹⁵⁰⁸ Engelbach, *Harageh*, 16, pl. xiv, 5; Petrie, *Objects*, 6, pl. II,9; S. Quirke, "Cylindrical Pendant," in *Ancient Egypt Transformed: The Middle Kingdom*, ed. A. Oppenheim et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 204-5, cat. 138.

A	Brussels ¹⁵⁰⁹	unprov.	N/A	MK	gold	
A	Beirut Nat. Mus. (U) ¹⁵¹⁰	Byblos	level vi, deposit B	MK	gold	
A	MMA 22.1.61 ¹⁵¹¹	el-Lisht	cemetery, pit 368	MK	gold	
B	Brooklyn 59.199.1 ¹⁵¹²	el-Lisht	cemetery, W. of Amenemhat III pyramid	12D.	gold	corrosion indicates possible copper inner case
B	Philadelphia E 9198 ¹⁵¹³	Abydos	tomb E 108	12D.	electrum, wire around granules	clay plugs each end
B	Hilton Price coll. ¹⁵¹⁴	Thebes (?)	N/A	MK(?)	silver, wire around granules	
B	Chicago, OI 7567 ¹⁵¹⁵	Abydos	Tomb	MK	gold	garnet
B	MMA 22.1.139a ¹⁵¹⁶	el-Lisht	cemetery, pit 884	l.12D.	gold	
B	MMA 22.1.166a ¹⁵¹⁷	el-Lisht	cemetery, pit 885	m.13D.	gold	top part
B	MMA 22.1.166b,c ¹⁵¹⁸	el-Lisht	cemetery, pit 885	m.13D.	gold	
C	Cairo, CG 53139 ¹⁵¹⁹	Dahshur	tomb (Meret)	12D.	gold	
C	Brooklyn 13.1038 ¹⁵²⁰	Abydos	tomb D 303	12-e.13D.	gold	garnet
C	Cairo, CG 52807 ¹⁵²¹	Beni Hasan	tomb 487 (Seneb)	12D.	gold	

¹⁵⁰⁹ Wilkinson, *AE Jewellery*, pl. 1D.

¹⁵¹⁰ Dunand, *Fouilles des Byblos*, I, 156 no. 2314.

¹⁵¹¹ Andrews, *Jewellery* I, 92.

¹⁵¹² Wilkinson, *AE Jewellery*, pl. 1E.

¹⁵¹³ Garstang, *El Arábah*, 4, pl. I; Williams, *Gold and Silver Jewellery*, 50, pl. 1a.

¹⁵¹⁴ Hilton Price, *Catalogue*, I, 116, no. 1184.

¹⁵¹⁵ Williams, *Gold and Silver Jewellery*, 50. Number 1567 in Andrews, *Jewellery* I, 92 is not correct. Probably 7567.

¹⁵¹⁶ Andrews, *Jewellery* I, 92.

¹⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵¹⁹ Morgan, *Fouilles à Dahchour*, I, 61, no. 17, pl. XVII.

¹⁵²⁰ Naville, *Cemeteries of Abydos*, III, 27, pl. pl. VIII, 11; Williams, *Gold and Silver Jewellery*, 50, pl. 1B.

¹⁵²¹ Garstang, *Burial Customs*, 113, figs. 104-5.

C	Beirut Nat. Mus. (U) ¹⁵²²	Byblos	level vi, deposit B	12D.	gold	
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Table 23 - Type 2 Cylindrical Amulets

Style	Object	Location	Context	Date	Materials
A	Ashmolean 1935.170 ¹⁵²³	Armant	tomb 1310	OK/FIP-MK	cylindrical beads of various materials, capped at ends with gold
A	Brooklyn 51.226 ¹⁵²⁴	Dahshur (?)	N/A	12D.	gold and amethyst beads
A	MMA 15.3.86 ¹⁵²⁵	Lisht	tomb 493 (Nakht)	12D.	gold, wood, green feldspar, lapis lazuli, jasper, beryl
A	Untraceable	Diospolis Parva	tomb W 38 ¹⁵²⁶	MK	colored stones
A	Cairo, CG 52808 ¹⁵²⁷	Beni Hasan	tomb 487 (Seneb)	MK	gold, lapis lazuli, green feldspar
A	Cairo, CG 52809 ¹⁵²⁸	Beni Hasan	tomb 487 (Seneb)	MK	gold, green feldspar, carnelian
A	Cairo, CG 52810 ¹⁵²⁹	Beni Hasan	tomb 487 (Seneb)	MK	gold, green feldspar, carnelian
A	UC6408(i) ¹⁵³⁰	Harageh	tomb 211	MK	lapis lazuli and green feldspar discs on copper wire

¹⁵²² Dunand, *Fouilles des Byblos*, I, 125, no. 1859, pl. cxxxvi.

¹⁵²³ R. Mond and O. H. Myers, *Cemeteries of Armant*, I (MEEF 42; London: EEF, 1937) 87; pls. XXXVI.4, XXXIX.7.

¹⁵²⁴ Hilton Price, *Catalogue*, I, 136, no. 1430a.

¹⁵²⁵ Andrews, *Jewellery* I, 92. I supplied additional tomb and materials information from museum website.

¹⁵²⁶ Petrie, *Diospolis Parva*, 43, pl. XXVII.

¹⁵²⁷ Garstang, *Burial Customs*, 113, figs. 104-5.

¹⁵²⁸ Garstang, *Burial Customs*, 113, figs. 104-5.

¹⁵²⁹ Garstang, *Burial Customs*, 113, figs. 104-5.

¹⁵³⁰ Engelbach, *Harageh*, 16, pl. XIV, 5 (left).

					with gold caps
A	UC6409(i) ¹⁵³¹	Harageh	tomb 275	MK	gold, lapis lazuli, and glazed composition /green feldspar
A	Cleveland 1915.26 ¹⁵³²	Harageh	tomb 308 ¹⁵³³	MK	feldspar, rock crystal, gold on copper wire
A	Manchester 6133A ¹⁵³⁴	Harageh	tomb 336	MK	cloisonné work electrum inlaid with carnelian, lapis lazuli, and green feldspar
A	UC6408(ii) ¹⁵³⁵	Harageh	tomb 352	MK	gold banded, carnelian and green feldspar or turquoise beads
A	Said to be in Aberdeen	Harageh	tomb 532	MK	fragments, "cf. pl. XIV, 2" ¹⁵³⁶
A	Untraceable	Harageh	tomb 278	MK	fragments, "cf. pl. XIV, 2" ¹⁵³⁷

¹⁵³¹ Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. LX.

¹⁵³² Engelbach, *Harageh*, 12, pl. XIV, 2.

¹⁵³³ The tomb register says, "gold and quartz cylinder amulets" and one is shown in Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. XIV, 2, but p. 12 and the actual plate shows only one cylinder. The p. 12 description states "amulet made by threading discs of quartz and other stones on a core of copper wire, and fitting both ends with hollow caps of gold," but the Cleveland Art Museum website describes it as gold, feldspar, and rock crystal (clear quartz), matching the description in Andrews, *Jewellery*, I, 92. The cylinder described by Andrews as from the same tomb, but untraceable, could not be found. Andrews seemed to have assumed two different cylinders due to the tomb register and dispersal list, taking the description on p.12 to refer to one in University College London. However, since the description and the plate itself only discusses one cylinder, it is more likely that the dispersal list accidentally double-listed the one cylindrical amulet and then in the tomb register.

¹⁵³⁴ Engelbach, *Harageh*, 12, pl. XIV, 4.

¹⁵³⁵ Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. LXI (tomb register).

¹⁵³⁶ Engelbach, *Harageh*, 13, pl. LXI (tomb register).

¹⁵³⁷ Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. LX (tomb register).

A	Untraceable	Harageh	tomb 343	MK	gold and feldspar fragments, "cf. no. 308" ¹⁵³⁸
A	Untraceable	Harageh	tomb 358	MK	fragments, "cf. pl. XIV, 2" ¹⁵³⁹
A	Cairo, CG 53072 ¹⁵⁴⁰	Dahshur	tomb (Meret)	MK	gold, lapis lazuli, turquoise
A	MMA 26.7.1308 ¹⁵⁴¹	Dahshur	purchased	MK	lapis lazuli and turquoise beads on core, separated by gold
A	MFA 27.918 ¹⁵⁴²	Kumma	tomb H 213	MK	lapis lazuli and gold beads, silver rod, gold caps
A	Untraceable	Lisht	tomb (Senebtisi) ¹⁵⁴³	MK	silver spike with gold leaf and one glazed composition bead
A	in Kyoto, Japan	Qau	grave 1415 ¹⁵⁴⁴	MK	green glass and gold foil bands
A	Ashmolean EE 570-1 ¹⁵⁴⁵	el Arabah	tomb E 269	MK	amethyst and felspar beads, silver foil, copper wire core, one silver cap
A	UC25970 ¹⁵⁴⁶	Bubastis	by temple	19D.	alternating zigzag lapis lazuli (8)

¹⁵³⁸ Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. LX (tomb register).

¹⁵³⁹ Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. LXI (tomb register).

¹⁵⁴⁰ Morgan, *Fouilles à Dahchour*, I, 70, no. 56, pl. XIX; Aldred, *Jewels*, pl. 46, left.

¹⁵⁴¹ Winlock, "Elements," 139^R and plate.

¹⁵⁴² Andrews, *Jewellery* I, 92.

¹⁵⁴³ Mace and Winlock *Senebtisi*, 21, 75, pl. XXVI.


¹⁵⁴⁴ Brunton, *Qau and Badari*, III. I, pl. III, 7.

¹⁵⁴⁵ Garstang, *El Arábah*, 45.

¹⁵⁴⁶ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 7, pl. V.56.

					and gold beads (8)
B	Ashmolean 1914.645 ¹⁵⁴⁷	Harageh	tomb 354	MK	wood, bound with spiral of narrow gold strip, gold foil caps
B	Cairo, CG 53140 ¹⁵⁴⁸	Dahshur	tomb (Sit-Hathor)	MK	gold, lapis lazuli
B	MFA 27.886 ¹⁵⁴⁹	Semna	tomb S 560	MK	carnelian and gold
B	Ashmolean 1912.525 ¹⁵⁵⁰	Abydos	tomb S 44	MK	fine silver wire over black matrix
B	Louvre AF 2339 ¹⁵⁵¹	unprov.	N/A	MK	lapis lazuli cylinder bead with gold caps
B	Untraceable	Thebes	tomb 24 ¹⁵⁵²	L. MK(?)	green stone cylinder mounted in gold

4.5 The *tjt*-Amulet

The *tjt*-amulet , which some scholars had referred to as either the “girdle of Isis” or “blood of Isis,” resembles a knot of cloth, with a top loop and two arms hanging down. Since the Old Kingdom, representations of the *tjt* frequently occurred in association with the *dd*-pillar. While its meaning in earlier periods is less certain, Egyptians understood the *tjt* as a symbol of Isis since the New Kingdom.

¹⁵⁴⁷ Engelbach, *Harageh*, 13, pls. XXII. I, LXI.

¹⁵⁴⁸ Morgan, *Fouilles à Dahchour*, I, 61, no. 16, fig. 131.

¹⁵⁴⁹ R. Caminos, *Semna-Kumma, V. 1: The Temple of Semna* (ASE 37; London: EEF, 1998), 98, fig. 57.

¹⁵⁵⁰ Naville, *Cemeteries of Abydos*, 11, 45, pl. IX, 2.

¹⁵⁵¹ Andrews, *Jewellery I*, 92.

¹⁵⁵² Carnarvon and Carter, *Five Year's Explorations*, 53, pl. XLV, D-E.

Central to the interpretation of the *tjt* is a spell from the Book of the Dead.¹⁵⁵³ An important feature of this spell was the importance of red as the main color for the amulet. There are varying interpretations whether the *tjt* -amulet, given its association with red and blood,¹⁵⁵⁴ represented specifically a menstrual bandage¹⁵⁵⁵ or rather a girdle knot.¹⁵⁵⁶ If so, it could have been related to the anti-miscarriage tampons discussed in some of the New Kingdom medical-magical papyri. In either case, the *tjt* could serve a protective blocking function.¹⁵⁵⁷ Both literary analysis and an examination of the contexts in which the object occurred shed some light on this issue.

The following is said about the knot of Isis in BD 156:¹⁵⁵⁸

*r n tît n hnmt snf.t n.t ist 3hw.t n.t ist hk3w.t n.t ist wd3w m s3w wr pn s3w ir
bt3.f dd-mdw hr tît n hnmt iwh.ti m mw nw nh-imy mnh.ti hr hty n nh rdi.ti n
3h r hhy.f hrw n sm3 t3 ir irw n.f nn wd3w r hhy.f wnn 3hw ist m s3 h3w.f h3c hr
s3 ist im.f m33.f sw m s3t3w n w3t r.f r pt r.f r t3 ss m3c hh n sp*

Formula for a *tjt*-knot of jasper

Your blood is yours Isis, your powers of light are yours, Isis.

Your powers of word are yours, Isis.

Amulets are the protection of this great one,
guarding against the one who would inflict his injury.

Words spoken over a *tjt*-knot of jasper sprinkled with water of the *nh-imy* plant,
strung on a fiber of sycamore

and placed at the neck of the blessed dead on the day of burial.

As for anyone at whose neck these amulets are placed,
the powers of Isis will be the protection of his body,
so that Horus son of Isis will rejoice over him when he sees him in secrecy.

No way is against him,

his arm is towards heaven, his arm is towards earth.

A correct matter a million times.

¹⁵⁵³ BD Ch. 156.

¹⁵⁵⁴ Bonnet, *Reallexikon*, 333

¹⁵⁵⁵ A. Wiedemann, "Ägyptische Religion," *AfR* 21 (1922): 463; Westendorf, "Isis Knoten," 204; Myśliwiec, *Eros on the Nile*, 142-143.

¹⁵⁵⁶ Wendrich, "Entangled," 250.

¹⁵⁵⁷ Wendrich, "Entangled," 250.

¹⁵⁵⁸ Kákósy, "La magia nell'antico Egitto," 82; Faulkner, *The Ancient Book of the Dead*, 154-5

Based on this spell, a number of scholars had associated the *tjt* with a menstrual bandage containing the blood of Isis.¹⁵⁵⁹ According to Wendrich, if the *tjt* was a girdle knot, it would be a looped reef knot, with two loops and two ends protruding from the knot.¹⁵⁶⁰ In this interpretation, the *tjt* would have been simply one type of protective knot, while most references used the term *ts*, either as a stopper knot¹⁵⁶¹ or as circular knotting.¹⁵⁶²

Besides the spell discussed above, another passage from the same text may be relevant in the interpretation of the *tjt*-amulet. It discussed the magical protection of the pregnant womb of Isis against Seth.¹⁵⁶³

wḏ. =f n-j mk.t s3=j m-hnw ḥ.t=j; ts.n=f šnw.t ḥ3=f m-hnw jd.t=j tn

“He has decreed for me protection for my son within my womb, he has knit together an entourage about him within this womb of mine...”

While some scholars had presumed that this protection referred to the *tjt*,¹⁵⁶⁴ the spell itself did not specifically mention this object. Bonnet had doubted there was even a connection between the blood of Isis and the *tjt* -loop.¹⁵⁶⁵ Wendrich instead had viewed the phrasing *ts.n.f šnwt ḥ3.f* to refer to a circular protective knotting. In light of the iconographic evidence below, the first possibility is far less certain.

The *tjt* occurred in reliefs, as amulets, and as furniture inlays. For each of these types of depictions, the predominant context is funerary. Indeed, the object originally may have been

¹⁵⁵⁹ Andrews, *Amulets of Ancient Egypt*, 44-5; Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 116.

¹⁵⁶⁰ Wendrich, “Entangled,” 250, 254.

¹⁵⁶¹ See the New Kingdom miscarriage spells in § 5.2.4.2.

¹⁵⁶² Wendrich, “Entangled,” 250.

¹⁵⁶³ CT II, 218c-e (Spell 148): Faulkner, *Coffin Texts* I, 126; Faulkner, “The Pregnancy of Isis,” 40-1; M. Gilula, “Coffin Texts Spell 148,” *JEA* (1957): 14; R. O’Connell, “The emergence of Horus,” *JEA* 69 (1983): 74.

¹⁵⁶⁴ Hannig, “Schwangerschaft,” 93; Westendorf, “Isisknoten,” 204; Myśliwiec, *Eros on the Nile*, 142-143.

¹⁵⁶⁵ Bonnet, *Reallexikon*, 332.

equivalent to the *nh*-sign, as discussed below.

Depictions of the *tjt* in reliefs occurred relatively early and were heavily associated with the *dd*-pillar (Figure 212). Indeed, these symbols appeared as early as the First Dynasty.¹⁵⁶⁶ Likewise, evidence suggest that the *tjt* was strongly associated with the *nh*. A couple of emblems on ivory fragments from the reign of Den or earlier¹⁵⁶⁷ occurred in friezes alternating with the *wꜣs*-emblem, and contextually can be either a *tjt* or *nh*.¹⁵⁶⁸ Another instance is a relief from the early Second Dynasty,¹⁵⁶⁹ where the *dd*-pillar is depicted in combination with the *nh*, serving as an early model for later illustrations with the *dd* and *tjt*.¹⁵⁷⁰



Figure 212 – Old Kingdom relief depicting *tjt*-signs with *dd*-signs. Firth and Quibell, *Step Pyramid II*, pl. 43.

¹⁵⁶⁶ Schäfer, "Djed-Pfeiler," 426, Abb. 4; Kakosy, "La magia nell'antico Egitto," 79; Z. Y. Saad, *Royal Excavations at Saqqara and Helwan* (SASAE 3; Cairo: IFAO, 1947), 27, pl. XIVb, XV.

¹⁵⁶⁷ Petrie, *Royal Tombs*, II, pl. 6[I]; pl. 39 [34].

¹⁵⁶⁸ Fischer, "Some emblematic uses,"

¹⁵⁶⁹ Petrie, *Gizeh and Rifeh*, pl. 5 E (Bottom left); cf. Fischer, "Some emblematic uses," fig. 15.

¹⁵⁷⁰ Reign of Kha-Sekhemwy: J.E. Quibell, *Hierakonpolis I* (London, 1900), pl. 2; Cf. H. Schäfer, "Der Reliefschmuck der Berliner Tür," *MDAIK* 4 (1933): 3, fig. 2 (d, g). Third Dynasty: Schäfer, "Der Reliefschmuck," fig. 2. c, e-f.

A similar pattern emerged with depictions from the Middle Kingdom. In at least one instance from the coffin object friezes, the frequent group $\epsilon nh-\epsilon nh$ was replaced by $\epsilon nh-tjt$,¹⁵⁷¹ which reoccurred in New Kingdom tombs.¹⁵⁷² A segment of relief showed another scene that depicted the tjt (Figure 213).¹⁵⁷³ In this depiction, Seth stood on a standard that has arms holding out a bundle of year-staffs in the right hand and a $w3s$ -sign and ϵnh -sign in the other. Behind the Seth standard, there are two large year staffs perpendicularly interlinked by an amulet on which hang the large numbers. On the forward bent tip of the first staff, a tjt hangs on its top tip. These types of depictions indicate that the tjt belonged to the same circle of thought as the $w3s$, the $w3d$, and the dd , insofar as it is the symbol of 'permanence', and as the ϵnh , which the tit is closest in shape.¹⁵⁷⁴ Prior to the New Kingdom, there is no firm evidence linking the sign to Isis.¹⁵⁷⁵ It is also notable that the oldest form of the tjt -sign, which clearly reveals the lower part as splayed, apparently free-hanging bands, occasionally resurfaced in those 'device friezes' of the Middle Kingdom.¹⁵⁷⁶ These depictions are similar to the belts worn by deities,¹⁵⁷⁷ which suggests both the ϵnh and tjt were either belts¹⁵⁷⁸ or magical knots.¹⁵⁷⁹

¹⁵⁷¹ See Jéquier, *Les frises d'objets*, 335 (Schäfer, *Priestergräber*, Taf. 11). For the meaning of the object frieze see Schäfer in ZÄS XLIII, p. 66.

¹⁵⁷² Wreszinski, *Atlas*, Bd. I, Bl. 257.

¹⁵⁷³ Cairo Inv. 40484: Schäfer, "Djed-Pfeiler," 428., figs. 6-7.

¹⁵⁷⁴ Schäfer, "Djed-Pfeiler," 429.

¹⁵⁷⁵ Schäfer, "Djed-Pfeiler," 430; Bonnet, *Reallexikon*, 332.

¹⁵⁷⁶ Schäfer, "Djed-Pfeiler," 427.

¹⁵⁷⁷ Borchardt, *S'ahure* II, Bl. 28-30; cf. *Annales du Service* Bd. XXIX, Taf. Next to p. 42 and Murray, *Ancient Egypt*, (1922), 16, no. 20.

¹⁵⁷⁸ Schäfer, "Djed-Pfeiler," 427; Bonnet, *Reallexikon*, 332.

¹⁵⁷⁹ See Wiedemann, *Das alte Ägypten* and Loret, *Sphinx*, Bd. V, 138.

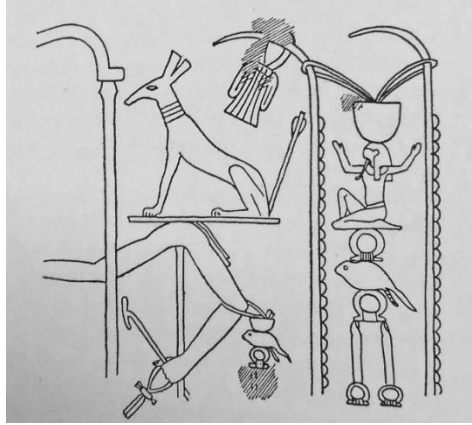


Figure 213 - Cairo Inv. 40484. Image from Schäfer, "Djed-Pfeiler," fig. 7.

Unlike the relief depictions, the *tjt* amulet primarily occurred from the New Kingdom and later. Excavators found many in tombs. Indeed, some had abbreviated versions of BD 156, while others sometimes had other formulae, such as the spell for shabtis, written on a *tjt* amulet.¹⁵⁸⁰ Only a handful of excavated examples are currently known from settlement contexts (Figure 214 and Table 24). While the amulet may have had a use in daily life, the evidence is rather weak.

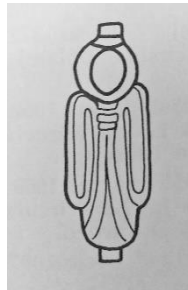


Figure 214 – Amulet of *tjt* from Beth Shan. Image from James and McGovern, *Beth Shan*, V. II, Fig. 61.7.

Table 24 – The *tjt*-Amulet in Domestic Contexts

Museum number	Site	Context	Date	Material	Description
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¹⁵⁸⁰ Bonnet, *Reallexikon*, 333.

Manchester 689 ¹⁵⁸¹	Gurob		18-19D.	faience	String of pendants an amulets, including <i>tjt</i> -knot
NMS A.1921.1485 ¹⁵⁸²	Gurob		19D.	jasper	Complete; disproportionately small top loop
UC68279 ¹⁵⁸³	Amarna		1.18D.	faience	Modelled on main surface; flat on the other.
UC1103 ¹⁵⁸⁴	Amarna		1.18D.	faience	Threading hole at base
Fitzwilliam E.GA.6511.1943 ¹⁵⁸⁵	Amarna (?)		1.18D.	faience	Amulet with suspension loop
Turin Inv. 12506	Gebelein		18D.	faience	Broken at top, suspension loop at bottom
No number ¹⁵⁸⁶	Deir el-Medina		19-20D.	Faience	Standard <i>tjt</i>
OIM E15355 ¹⁵⁸⁷	Medinet Habu		NK	Clay	Mold engraved for <i>tjt</i> amulet
BM EA86551 ¹⁵⁸⁸	Amara West	Town, D.12.1, lowest level	NK	Faience	Flat back; pair of small cylindrical holes for attachment to larger jewelry piece.
No number ¹⁵⁸⁹	Beth Shan	Level IX	NK	Faience	Simplified <i>tjt</i>
Philadelphia 29-104-278 ¹⁵⁹⁰	Beth Shan	Locus 1068, near steps	NK	Faience	Standard <i>tjt</i>
Jerusalem RM J941 ¹⁵⁹¹	Beth Shan	Locus 1068, near steps	NK	Faience	Standard <i>tjt</i>
Jerusalem RM 36-1645 (missing) ¹⁵⁹²	Beth Shan	Locus 1092	NK	green glass	Standard <i>tjt</i>

¹⁵⁸¹ Griffith, *Catalogue*, 60.

¹⁵⁸² Brunton and Engelbach, *Gurob*, 15-16, Pls 20, 28, 50.

¹⁵⁸³ Accessed on museum online catalogue 8/30/2018.

¹⁵⁸⁴ Samson, *Amarna: City of Akhenaten and Nefertiti*, 82-3, pl.47 (ii); Petrie, *Amulets*, pl. VII, 88.

¹⁵⁸⁵ Accessed on museum online catalogue 8/30/2018.

¹⁵⁸⁶ Bruyère, *Rapport 1948-51*, fig. 11, second row, fourth from left.

¹⁵⁸⁷ Accessed on museum online catalogue 8/30/2018.

¹⁵⁸⁸ Spencer, *Amara West I*, 166.

¹⁵⁸⁹ McGovern, *Late Palestinian Pendants*, 59-60, no. 237

¹⁵⁹⁰ James and McGovern, *Beth Shan*, v.II, Figure 59.12; pl. 28j.

¹⁵⁹¹ James and McGovern, *Beth Shan*, v.II, under Figure 59.12; under pl. 28j.

¹⁵⁹² James and McGovern, *Beth Shan*, v. II, Figure 61.7.

Philadelphia 29-104-310 ¹⁵⁹³	Beth Shan	Locus 1092	NK	Faience	Simplified <i>tjt</i>
Philadelphia 29-104-245 ¹⁵⁹⁴	Beth Shan	Locus 1068, below steps	NK	Faience	Simplified <i>tjt</i>
No number ¹⁵⁹⁵	Beth Shan	Beth Shan, Level IX	19D.	Faience	Standard <i>tjt</i>
No number ¹⁵⁹⁶	Abu Hawam	Stratum V, Square D4, Building 53	19D.	blue glaze	Standard <i>tjt</i>
No number ¹⁵⁹⁷	Abu Hawam	Stratum V, Square D4, Building 53	19D.	blue glaze	Standard <i>tjt</i>
No number ¹⁵⁹⁸	Tell Abu Hawam	Building 53, Stratum V	19D.	faience	Standard <i>tjt</i>
No number ¹⁵⁹⁹	Tell el-Far'ah South		19-20D.		Standard <i>tjt</i>

Furniture inlays occurred primarily in the Old Kingdom and again in the New Kingdom (Table 25).¹⁶⁰⁰ However, these furniture items surfaced in burials, so it is questionable whether such inlays would have occurred on beds for everyday usage.

Table 25 - The *tjt*-Sign on Furniture

Museum number	Site	Context	Date	Material	Description
MFA 29.2217.1-12	Giza	G 7600 S.E. 77	5D.	bone (?)	Dozen design

¹⁵⁹³ McGovern, *Late Palestinian Pendants*, no. 238; James and McGovern, *Beth Shan*, v. II, Figure 61.8; pl. 28k.

¹⁵⁹⁴ McGovern, *Late Palestinian Pendants*, no. 239; James and McGovern, *Beth Shan*, v. II, under Fig. 61.8 and pl. 28k.

¹⁵⁹⁵ McGovern, *Late Palestinian Pendants*, 59-60, no. 233, pl. 15

¹⁵⁹⁶ Herrmann, *Ägyptische Amulette aus Palatina/Israel II*, Cat. 101.

¹⁵⁹⁷ Herrmann, *Ägyptische Amulette aus Palatina/Israel II*, Cat. 102.

¹⁵⁹⁸ R.W. Hamilton, *Excavations at Tell Abu Hawam* (QDAP 4; London: Oxford University Press, 1935), pl. 25.g (group 399) = McGovern, *Late Palestinian Pendants*, 59-60, no. 236

¹⁵⁹⁹ J. L. Starkey and G. L. Harding, *Beth-Pelet Cemetery* (BSAE 52; London: Quaritch, 1932), pl. 51.

¹⁶⁰⁰ All found in museum online catalogues.

					elements for a chair in shape of <i>tjt</i> - loop
MFA 29.2389	Giza	G 7690	OK	Ivory	Parts of inlay in shape of <i>tjt</i> - loop
BM AES 30727	Possibly el-Bersha		MK	Ivory	Five pieces, openwork, curving upper support held by two back-to-back <i>tjt</i> amulets
MMA 36.3.152	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	Tomb of Hatnefer and Ramose (below TT 71), outside entrance	e.18D.	wood, linen cord	Low chair; back with frontal Bes-figure at center, flanked by alternating <i>tjt</i> and <i>dd</i> symbols
Fitzwilliam E.GA.4565.1943	Thebes		18D.	Wood	Knot furniture fitting
NMS A.1963.456	Abydos (?)		19D.	faience	Knot furniture fitting

The primary debate from the previous literature, based on literary analysis, was whether the *tjt*-loop was considered a menstrual bandage or a girdle knot. Rarely is the context of the amulets considered. The funerary context of many of these amulets is clear, such as containing a shortened version of BD 156.¹⁶⁰¹ Overall, the evidence is too weak to conclude that the *tjt* was a birth and fertility-related object, at least from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom. Indeed, the known repertoire of fertility-related material from this time did not depict the *tjt*.

¹⁶⁰¹ C. C. Van Siclen III, "An amulet of the mayor of Thebes Amenemhet," *Varia Aegyptiaca* 2.1 (1986): 79-82.

Like the *tjt*, the *psš-kf* occurred in predominantly funerary contexts from elite burials. Illustrated representations, as well as physical specimens such as amulets and furniture, date from the Old Kingdom on. Based on their associated funerary texts, some previous scholarship has ascribed birth and fertility roles to both objects. The overall evidence, however, suggests otherwise.

4.6 *Psš-kf* and *ntwri* blades

Over the past few decades, scholars have proposed various theories on the usage of the *psš-kf* and the *ntwri* blades within the Pyramid Texts, and their possible usage elsewhere, such as in childbirth. Roth's interpretation of the *psš-kf* as a tool, going back to the Predynastic fishtail knives, for cutting the umbilical cord¹⁶⁰² and the *ntwri* blades symbolizing the fingers of a midwife clearing the mouth of a newborn of mucus¹⁶⁰³ differs significantly from the conventional hypothesis of van Walsem.¹⁶⁰⁴ Roth and Roehrig also cited, as analogous with the four birth bricks, the several actions repeated four times and mentions of the four deities connected with the cardinal points.¹⁶⁰⁵ However, examination of the Predynastic fishtail knives and later *psš-kf* objects, the grammar of the relevant Pyramid Text spells, and the textual evidence goes against Roth's theory.

4.6.1 Physical Remains

Possibly the earliest physical remains of the *psš-kf* came in the form of Predynastic fishtail knives, which resemble the shape of later model sets and full-scale remains of the object.

¹⁶⁰² Roth, "The *psš-kf*," 113-147; D. Mazzone, "The fishtail knife amulet UC14892/2 in the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, University College London." *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 20 (2010): 157-8; W.B. Harer "Pesheshket: The First Special-Purpose Surgical Instrument," *Obstetrics & Gynaecology* 83 (1994): 1053-1055.

¹⁶⁰³ Roth, "Fingers, stars, and the 'Opening of the Mouth'," 57-79.

¹⁶⁰⁴ R. van Walsem, "The *psš-kf*," 193-249.

¹⁶⁰⁵ Roth and Roehrig, "Magical bricks," 134.

The instrument also occurred in a rare amulet type, with a human head represented on one end. From the shape and contexts of these objects, a function of splitting the mouth open appears to remain the best explanation.

Part of Roth's argument connecting the *psš-kf* to women had relied on linking the instrument to the Predynastic fishtail knives,¹⁶⁰⁶ some of which occur in the tombs of women.¹⁶⁰⁷ Frequently, scholars had tended to assume that people used these knives for cutting the umbilical cord,¹⁶⁰⁸ with the fishtail design allowing the midwife to cut the slippery cord from different angles.¹⁶⁰⁹ However, in many of the tombs in which the sex of the owner could be determined, the fishtail knives occurred in those of men.¹⁶¹⁰ Indeed, in regards to the site of Matmar, Brunton had stated that "all the graves containing knives, whether fishtail or otherwise, were of males where the sex could be determined."¹⁶¹¹ Thus, the fishtail knife appears associated with men, with no support for its interpretation as a tool for cutting the umbilical cord.¹⁶¹²

Likewise, there is currently no evidence to prove that Egyptians used the fishtail knives for cutting the umbilical cord. Indeed, use wear analysis has shown that some may have had use for heavy-duty work.¹⁶¹³ As noted by Graves-Brown,¹⁶¹⁴ Egyptians after the Early Dynastic Period did not commonly manufacture the *psš-kf* in flint.

¹⁶⁰⁶ Roth, "The *psš-kf*," 114. Good typology in Van Walsem, "The *psš-kf*," 227ff.

¹⁶⁰⁷ É. Massoulard, "Lances fourchues et *peseshkaf*: à propos de deux acquisitions récentes du Musée du Louvre," *RdÉ* 2 (1936): 152 noted the presence of models in a woman's tomb. For examples of flint, *psš-kf*s found with female remains, see E. J. Baumgartel, *Petrie's Naqada Excavation, a supplement* (London, 1970), pl. 42 (Naqada tomb 1417); Petrie, *Diospolis Parva*, 33, pl. vi (tomb B 109).

¹⁶⁰⁸ For example, Allen, *The Art of Medicine in ancient Egypt*, 11.

¹⁶⁰⁹ Roth, "The *psš-kf*," 123.

¹⁶¹⁰ See T. Hikade, "Getting the ritual right – Fishtail knives in Predynastic Egypt," in *Ancient Egypt – Temple of the full world. Studies in honour of Jan Assmann*, ed. S. Meyer (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2003), 142-148.

¹⁶¹¹ Brunton, *Matmar*, 21.

¹⁶¹² Hikade, "Getting the ritual right," 138, 150.

¹⁶¹³ T. Hester, "Functional Analysis of Ancient Egyptian Chipped Stone Tools: The Potential for Future Research," *Journal of Field Archaeology* 3 (1976): 346-351.

¹⁶¹⁴ Graves-Brown, "Flint and Life Crises," 72.

While remains of the historical *psš-kf* and model sets including the instrument, all from tombs, occurred primarily in the Old Kingdom, pictorial representations date from the 12th Dynasty down to the Ptolemaic Period. Of 38 known historical *psš-kf* instruments,¹⁶¹⁵ only one dates with certainty to the Middle Kingdom,¹⁶¹⁶ while two date to the New Kingdom.¹⁶¹⁷ Most of these instruments with known material are made of flint, with limestone and alabaster examples to imitate the former.¹⁶¹⁸ The term *kf* appears to have designated the object as being of flint, based on most *psš-kf* being red or spotted flint¹⁶¹⁹ and the depiction of the *psš-kf* on offering lists in the same colors as known flint knives,¹⁶²⁰ ranging from dark grey, reddish brown, and white.¹⁶²¹ Likewise, three of the 27 model sets¹⁶²² date later than the Old Kingdom.¹⁶²³ In contrast to the physical evidence, figural representations of the *psš-kf* did not occur until the 12th Dynasty, continuing to the Ptolemaic Period, with four Middle Kingdom representations and 34 from the New Kingdom.¹⁶²⁴ Important for our consideration is that initial depictions of the *psš-kf* showed a bifid shape, with a later transition to the double feather during the New Kingdom.¹⁶²⁵

To Fanfoni,¹⁶²⁶ this earlier bifid shape makes sense for opening the mouth, in order to avoid the jaw tightening associated with rigor mortis. Indeed, Chapman and Gutpa's study of the head of a man found in Deir el Bersheh had noted mutilations of the facial and jaw bones

¹⁶¹⁵ For full list, see Van Walsem, "The *psš-kf*," 227-229.

¹⁶¹⁶ Hayes, *Scepter I*, fig. 111.

¹⁶¹⁷ J. Ruffle, *Heritage of the pharaohs: an introduction to Egyptian archaeology* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1977), f. 150; Roeder, *Hermopolis 1929-1939*, 267 §131, pl. 49k.

¹⁶¹⁸ van Walsem, "The *psš-kf*," 230.

¹⁶¹⁹ J. R. Harris, *Lexicographical Studies in ancient Egyptian Minerals* (Berlin: Akad.-Verlag, 1961), 228-9.

¹⁶²⁰ Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian Minerals and Industries*, 411-2; Griffith, *Beni Hassan III*, pl. X.

¹⁶²¹ Griffith, *Beni Hassan III*, pl. XVII; IV, pl. XXV fig. 4; Blackman, *The Rock Tombs of Meir III*, 28, n. 4; Fanfoni, "Uno strumento funerario," 134.

¹⁶²² For full list, see van Walsem, "The *psš-kf*," 227-228.

¹⁶²³ Cairo 1765 (MK): Borchardt, *Denkmäler II*, 183-186; Cairo 1768 (OK-MK); Ruffle, *Heritage*, f. 150 (MK?).

¹⁶²⁴ For full list, see van Walsem, "The *psš-kf*," 232-234.

¹⁶²⁵ Van Walsem, "The *psš-kf*," 234; Bardinnet, *Dents et mâchoires*, 112, figs. 2 and 3.

¹⁶²⁶ Fanfoni, "Uno strumento funerario," 137-8.

consistent with mobilizing the jaw.¹⁶²⁷ Interestingly, the later double-plume shape appears similar to the emblem of the third nome of Upper Egypt,¹⁶²⁸ its capital being Hierakonpolis. Religious inscriptions stated that the mandible of Osiris was found at Hierakonpolis,¹⁶²⁹ which Bardinnet had interpreted as indicating that the *psš-ḳf* and the opening of the mouth associated the deceased with Osiris.¹⁶³⁰

In the First Intermediate Period and early Middle Kingdom, the *psš-ḳf* occurred in at least seven cases as an amulet in which the forked blade hangs from a human head (Figure 215).¹⁶³¹ In all but one amulet,¹⁶³² the head wore a long wig, and Brunton and Roth had attributed these objects as belonging to and mainly representing women.¹⁶³³ Indeed, two examples have protrusions for rivets that may be breasts,¹⁶³⁴ and one of them wears a Hathoric wig.¹⁶³⁵ However, in only two cases was the body associated with an amulet identified as female.¹⁶³⁶ For one amulet,¹⁶³⁷ Brunton had assumed the owner's gender based on the objects found in the tomb, while he had attributed the gender of another owner based on the tomb holding eight women and three men.¹⁶³⁸ Publication of another two did not provide details of the owner,¹⁶³⁹ so one can only guess the owner's gender based on other objects.¹⁶⁴⁰ In addition, a longer wig did not necessarily

¹⁶²⁷ P.H. Chapman and R. Gupta, Rajiv, "Reinvestigation of a Middle Kingdom Head provides new insights concerning mummification and its relationship to contemporary anatomic knowledge and funerary ritual," *JARCE* 43 (2007): 113-127.

¹⁶²⁸ Monet, *Géographie*, v. II, 41.

¹⁶²⁹ Vandier, *Jumilhac*, pl. V.

¹⁶³⁰ Bardinnet, *Dents et mâchoires*, 115-7.

¹⁶³¹ G. Brunton, "Pesesh-kef Amulets," *ASAE* 35 (1935): 213-7; D'Auria et al., *Mummies and Magic*, 224-5; Roth, "The *psš-ḳf*," 136, fig. 7.

¹⁶³² Cairo 47624: Brunton, "'Pesesh-kef' Amulets," 213 (No. 1).

¹⁶³³ Roth, "The *psš-ḳf*," 136-8.

¹⁶³⁴ MMA 22.1.279 and MFA 13.3920: Roth "The *psš-ḳf*," fig. 7e and g.

¹⁶³⁵ MMA 22.1.279: Brunton, "'Pesesh-kef' Amulets," 214-5 (No. 5).

¹⁶³⁶ Brunton, "'Pesesh-Amulets," 213-4 (Nos. 1 and 4).

¹⁶³⁷ Brunton, "'Pesesh-kef' Amulets," 213-4 (No. 2).

¹⁶³⁸ Brunton, "'Pesesh-kef' Amulets," 214-5 (No. 5).

¹⁶³⁹ D'Auria et al., *Mummies and Magic*, 224-5.

¹⁶⁴⁰ Following accessed from online museum database 9/1/2018: MFA 12.1264 came from same tomb as ring 12.1311, bead strings 12.1275, 12.1279, 12.1299, and foot-shaped pendant 12.1265. MFA 13.3920 had a pendant 13.3758 and spoon 13.3727a-b.

always represent a woman.¹⁶⁴¹ Likewise, while Roth had assumed the bald head of one amulet, with gapping mouth and large squinting eyes, represented an infant,¹⁶⁴² such representations of infants did not otherwise occur in Egyptian art.¹⁶⁴³

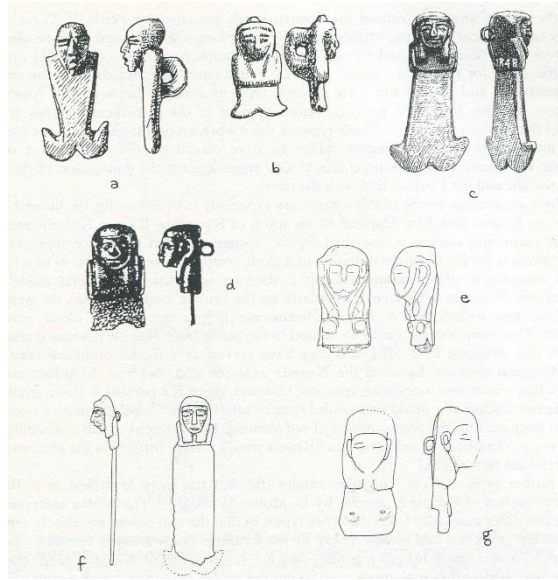


Figure 215 – Human-headed *psš-kf* amulets. Image from Roth, “The *psš-kf*,” fig. 7.

Other *psš-kf* amulets, without the human, date from the Nineteenth Dynasty to the Ptolemaic Period and are shaped very similarly to the double-plumes amulet (Figure 216).¹⁶⁴⁴ Of both types, two were worn on the neck of the mummy, while 12 were placed on the chest and three on the stomach, which Roth had assumed meant Egyptians associated the *psš-kf* to the navel.¹⁶⁴⁵ As discussed above, however, the context of the image strongly indicates an association with the jaw, consistent with the Pyramid Text spell. The relatively few amulets located on the stomach itself also argues against this theory. She also had stated that another New

¹⁶⁴¹ Ex: W.S. Smith, *The Art and Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*, 3rd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), figs. 146, 185, 193-4; G. Robins, *The Art of Ancient Egypt* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), figs. 79-80, 90, 110, 115.

¹⁶⁴² Cairo 47625: Roth, “The *psš-kf*,” 136; Brunton, “Pesesh-kef” Amulets,” 213 (No. 1).

¹⁶⁴³ See, for example, §5.2, 5.4, and 5.5 above.

¹⁶⁴⁴ Petrie, *Amulets*, 16, pl. 4

¹⁶⁴⁵ Roth, “The *psš-kf*,” 138.

Kingdom type of amulet, with the two halves separate at both top and base and connected by binding,¹⁶⁴⁶ was two reeds put together, similar to the ‘split reed’ used to cut the umbilical cord in tenth century CE Egypt.¹⁶⁴⁷ Given the great temporal and cultural separation between Ancient and Medieval Egypt, such a link is rather tentative.

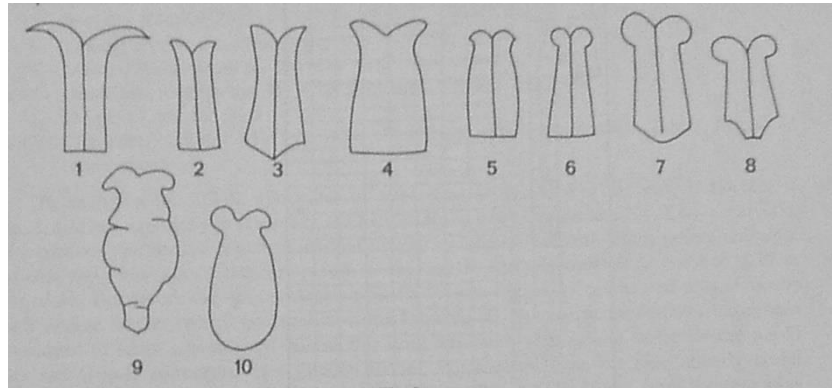


Figure 216 – *Psš-kf* amulets of various periods. Image from Van Walsem, “The *psš-kf*,” fig. 3.

Roth had also argued that the forked sign on Meskhenet’s head was the *psš-kf* and not a cow’s uterus,¹⁶⁴⁸ based on late texts where U31 (𓄿) appeared in the writing of the word *mwt*, ‘mother’ in epithets of goddesses and female priestly titles.¹⁶⁴⁹ She also claims that the bicornate cow uterus (𓄿) was not typically used for human women.¹⁶⁵⁰ However, given the Egyptian association of the cow with beauty and fertility,¹⁶⁵¹ a connection between the cow uterus and notions of fertility would be consistent with this evidence.

¹⁶⁴⁶ Müller-Winkler, *Die ägyptischen Objekt-Amuletten*, 405-413.

¹⁶⁴⁷ Roth, “The *Psš-kf*,” 138.

¹⁶⁴⁸ Roth, “The *Psš-kf*,” 140-4.

¹⁶⁴⁹ *Wb.* II, 54, 1-17. The *Belegstellungen* gives this writing for *mwt in mwt ntrw*, an epithet of Hathor (Dendera, Mar. IV 27b); in *mwt Ntr nt Wnn-nfr*, an epithet of Nut (*Edfu* I 157); and perhaps also in a title of a priestess (*Edfu* I 330).

¹⁶⁵⁰ Roth, “The *psš-kf*,” 144; *Wb.* IV, 76, 1-14.

¹⁶⁵¹ Speiser, “Meskhenet.”

4.6.2 Pyramid Texts: the *psš-ḳf* and the birth sequence theory

The section of the Pyramid Texts where the *psš-ḳf* occurred concerned a ritual to restore the use of the deceased's organs for the afterlife.¹⁶⁵² The oldest and best-preserved version of the spell concerning the *psš-ḳf* is Spell 37 of Unas (§30a),¹⁶⁵³ which has been subject to various interpretations. The two elements under question are the form *psš.tj* and the verb *psš* itself, determining what was divided and whether the usage of the verb was figurative or literal. It reads:



ismn(.i) n.k ʿrt(y).k(y) psš.t(j) psš-ḳf

I consolidate for you your mandible while it was divided: (instrument) *psš-ḳf*.¹⁶⁵⁴

One major difference in translations is whether *psš.tj* “having been divided” referred to the jaws or to Unas himself. Conventional interpretations understand the passage as the jaws being divided, such as Maspero’s rendering, “O Osiris N, I have established thy two jaws firmly to thy face, and henceforth they are divided”¹⁶⁵⁵ and Otto’s version, “I have fastened for thee thy two jaws, so that they are divided.”¹⁶⁵⁶ Although here Maspero and Otto had translated the form *psš.tj* as a pseudo-participle of result, it does not seem correct, since Edel in his Old Egyptian grammar did not recognize the use of a pseudo-participle of result.¹⁶⁵⁷ Allen had cited three

¹⁶⁵² Bardinnet, *Dents et mâchoires*, 110.

¹⁶⁵³ A. Piankoff, *The Pyramid of Unas* (Bollington Series XL:5; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), pl. LXV.

¹⁶⁵⁴ Bardinnet, *Dents et mâchoires*, 109; Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, 78; W. Helck, “Einige Bemerkungen zum Mundöffnungsritual,” *MDAIK* 22 (1967): 38.

¹⁶⁵⁵ G. Maspero, *Bibliothèque égyptologique: comprenant les œuvres des Egyptologues français* I (Paris, 1893), 313.

¹⁶⁵⁶ Otto, *Mundöffnung*, II, 97.

¹⁶⁵⁷ Edel, *Grammatik*, index, 626, 1st col.; Gardiner, *Grammar*, 240, n. 7a and Lefebvre, *Grammaire*, §350 record a pseudo-participle of result, but this is very rare and dates from a later phase of Egyptian.

examples.¹⁶⁵⁸ So, it is most likely that *psš.tj* is either an Old Perfective 3rd feminine dual if it refers to the jaw, or, if it refers to Unas, a 2nd Old Perfective. Van Walsem had translated this spell as, “O Unas, I establish for thee thy lower jaw which was divided; a(n instrument) divided (at the top) of flint.”¹⁶⁵⁹ Support for this interpretation is the inclusion of the term *ʿrt(y)* “jaw,” which is dual.¹⁶⁶⁰ Likewise, Van Walsem had contended that the usage of the Old Perfective 3rd feminine dual occurs in at least eight instances.¹⁶⁶¹

However, Roth had argued that the *-t* ending for the Old Perfective 3rd feminine dual is extremely rare, so it would be unlikely to occur so frequently in the Pyramid Texts.¹⁶⁶² Given the use of the dual term *ʿrt(y)* and Edel’s purpose of showing the most common forms,¹⁶⁶³ the Old Perfective 3rd feminine dual is still a possible interpretation. Indeed, New Kingdom variants of the spell make it clear that the mouth is separated: “I opened for you your mouth by means of *psš-ḳf* with which is open the mouth of every god and every goddess.”¹⁶⁶⁴ In contrast, Roth had stated that, based on the morphology, the subject of *psš.t(j)* must be Unas, but she had based it on her interpretation of the *psš-ḳf* as a birth instrument, rather than grounding her hypothesis to the grammar.¹⁶⁶⁵ Likewise, as seen above, a number of references refer to the jaw of Osiris being found and reunited.

The other main difficulty in interpretation of the function of the *psš-ḳf* concerns the verbal stem *psš*, which some scholars had translated as active, “what divides,” while others had

¹⁶⁵⁸ J. P. Allen, *The inflection of the verb in the Pyramid Texts* (Malibu: Undena Publications, 1984), 405-6, §589.

¹⁶⁵⁹ Van Walsem, “The *psš-ḳf*,” 198.

¹⁶⁶⁰ Van Walsem, “The *psš-ḳf*,” 200.

¹⁶⁶¹ Van Walsem, “The *psš-ḳf*,” 200.

¹⁶⁶² Roth, “The *psš-ḳf*,” 124.

¹⁶⁶³ Van Walsem, “The *psš-ḳf*,” 200.

¹⁶⁶⁴ Otto, *Mundöffnungsritual*, I, 90-1; II, 97-8; Fanfoni, “Une strumento funerario,” 137; Bardinot, *Dents et mâchoires*, 110.

¹⁶⁶⁵ Roth, “The *psš-ḳf*,” 124-6.

interpreted it as passive, “that which is divided,” with reference to the form of the instrument.¹⁶⁶⁶

Van Walsem had understood *psš* to mean ‘sagging, prolapsing,’ with the *psš-kf* serving to prop up the lower jaw.¹⁶⁶⁷ Van Walsem had considered the use of the verb, which does not usually mean

“to sag,”¹⁶⁶⁸ instead of other terms as a deliberate choice, namely a likely pun. Such puns

occurred elsewhere in the Pyramid Texts, such as the beer offering: “Unas, take for yourself the eye of Horus, so that you are equipped.”¹⁶⁶⁹ Another example from a later spell read, “Unas, take

for yourself the eye of Horus, which he withdrew from Seth.”¹⁶⁷⁰ As Bardiné had noted, this

interpretation would mean the opposite of opening the mouth, the very purpose of the ritual.¹⁶⁷¹

Roth instead had argued that the verb means “to divide into two or more pieces,” indicating a

division of Unas from the placenta and his mother, and is unlikely a pun. Yet, it is more sensible,

given the context of the spell which discussed the jaw, to accept Bardiné’s theory that the jaw

was divided, in reference to the mandible of Osiris.¹⁶⁷² The offering formula regarding the *psš-kf*

from the Temple of Edfu lends further support:¹⁶⁷³

*psš-n-kf hr.k (t)w3.n.i s(w)mꜥ.i sꜥr.n.(i) ʿ(r)ty.k r hr.k wꜥt r imnty.k hr ir gs-
dpt.k kt r izbty.k hr ir s3.k spd tsty.k ir n k3t.sn ʿh3.k hms.k r mr.k ntk nꜥr Wr
wr sw r nꜥrw ir ht n ʿnh n ʿnh(w)*

(Give the *psš-kf*.) Words to say: The *psš-kf* is (present) to you. I lift it in my hand and I raise (so) your mandible to your face. One on your right will be your bulwark, the other on your left will be your protection. How sharp is your teeth

¹⁶⁶⁶ See Otto, *Mundöffnungsritual*, and the brief note, E. Graefe, “Das sog. Mundöffnungsgerät “*psš-kf*,”” *JEA* 57 (1971): 203.

¹⁶⁶⁷ Van Walsem, “The *psš-kf*,” 201 and n.5.

¹⁶⁶⁸ There is a possible meaning of “to sag” elsewhere.

¹⁶⁶⁹ PT § 40b; Bardiné, *Dents et mâchoires*, 117-8. Wordplay between *htm* ‘to be equipped’ and the name of the *htm* vase in which the drink is served.

¹⁶⁷⁰ PT § 95c; Bardiné, *Dents et mâchoires*, 118. Wordplay between *šd* ‘withdraw’ and the offering that follows, the fruit *išd*.

¹⁶⁷¹ Bardiné, *Dents et mâchoires*, 110-1.

¹⁶⁷² Bardiné, *Dents et mâchoires*, 114, 119.

¹⁶⁷³ *Edfou* VII, 152, 13-16 and 153, 1-2. S. Cauville, *La théologie d’Osiris à Edfou* (BdE 91; Cairo: IFAO, 1983), 159; Bardiné, *Dents et mâchoires*, 112-4. Text cited by Otto, *Mundöffnungsritual*, II, 98, and by Van Walsem, “The *psš-kf*,” 205.

when it goes into action so that you eat to satiety because you are the great god,
the greatest of the gods, who made the cereals for the living ...

For the bulk of her argument, Roth had interpreted the PT 16-40 as a birth sequence.¹⁶⁷⁴

The fundamental problem with this line of argument is that it is mostly assertion, with hardly any mention of the medical-magical texts and birth objects. Such a usage of the *psš-*kf** did not occur anywhere else.

The first spell in this sequence calls upon Osiris and Thoth to seize all those who hate Unas and warned them not to loosen themselves from such foes.¹⁶⁷⁵ Given the use of the verb used, *šfh* 'to loosen,' in the Ebers spells concerning separating the child from its mother,¹⁶⁷⁶ Roth had asserted that the verb in the Pyramid Texts spell referred to a similar loosening of the deceased as the child in birth.¹⁶⁷⁷ However, the context of *šfh* was not limited to childbirth, with other spells from the same text using the verb to mean removing an illness or obstacle¹⁶⁷⁸ or escaping an enemy.¹⁶⁷⁹ Putting fetters on enemies was a common occurrence in spells.¹⁶⁸⁰

The next spells concerned the closeness of Unas to his *k3*,¹⁶⁸¹ for which Roth had attempted to link the *k3* with the placenta for the next sequence of spells.¹⁶⁸² The first related that four gods associated with the four cardinal points,¹⁶⁸³ as well as Osiris and Khenty-irty, managed to 'go forth with his *k3*' and assured Unas 'you also, will go forth with your *k3*.' While the repetition may indicate a form of sympathetic magic,¹⁶⁸⁴ none of the known medical-magical

¹⁶⁷⁴ Roth, "The *psš-*kf**," 118-120.

¹⁶⁷⁵ PT § 16.

¹⁶⁷⁶ See above, § 2.2.4.3.

¹⁶⁷⁷ Roth, "The *psš-*kf**," 118.

¹⁶⁷⁸ PT Sp. 258 (§ 308f.); PT Sp. 259 (§ 315c).

¹⁶⁷⁹ PT Sp. 573 (§ 1484e).

¹⁶⁸⁰ J.R. Ogdon, "Knots and ties: Studies in Ancient Egyptian Magic 3," *DE* 7 (1987): 29-31.

¹⁶⁸¹ PT §§ 17-21.



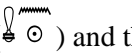
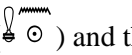
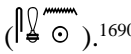
¹⁶⁸² Roth, "The *psš-*kf**," 118.

¹⁶⁸³ Faulkner, *The ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 5.

¹⁶⁸⁴ Roth, "The *psš-*kf**," 118.

papyri discussed above demonstrated such a link with the *k3* and placenta, nor that Egyptians would have used such a spell to expel the infant in childbirth. Likewise, attempts to link the *k3* and placenta based on ethnography¹⁶⁸⁵ are tentative at best. Additionally, Roth's suggestion that Egyptians, by use of the word *k3*, recognized the role of the placenta in nourishing the fetus is speculative.¹⁶⁸⁶

The next spells offered cold water and two pellets of natron, and urged Unas to go forth to Horus, who has brought the eye of Horus, and to take to the efflux that has come forth from himself.¹⁶⁸⁷ While Roth had argued that this spell referred to the amniotic liquid of birth,¹⁶⁸⁸ the efflux under discussion is clearly that from the deceased, rather than Unas' mother.

Roth had considered the next two offerings to represent the birth itself.¹⁶⁸⁹ PT 26 offered five pellets of southern natron from el-Kab and directed the king to open his mouth to receive the spittle of Horus and Seth. The spell linked the spit to the term *zmjn* (, , ,), which Roth had understood to be related to *mjn3* 'today' () and thus to the day of birth based on some later writings of the former with a sun-disk determinative ().¹⁶⁹⁰

However, the determinative did not appear in known writings of the word from at least the Old Kingdom through the Second Intermediate Period.¹⁶⁹¹ The next spell (PT 27) offered five pellets of northern natron from Wadi Natrum to the mouth, which the text compared to the mouth of a nursing calf on the day of his birth. While Roth had considered this analogy as identifying Unas

¹⁶⁸⁵ A. Blackman, "The Pharaoh's Placenta and the Moon-God Khons," *JEA* 3 (1916): 241 n. 3; H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* (Chicago 1948), 70-4.

¹⁶⁸⁶ Roth, "The *ps3-kf*," 127.

¹⁶⁸⁷ PT §§ 22-23.

¹⁶⁸⁸ Roth, "The *ps3-kf*," 119-120.

¹⁶⁸⁹ Roth, "The *ps3-kf*," 120.

¹⁶⁹⁰ *Wb.* III, 453, 5-6; Roth, "The *ps3-kf*," 120.

¹⁶⁹¹ Hannig, *Äg. Wb.* I, 1126; *Ibid.* II, 2208. It does appear in L. Lesko, *Dict. LE* III, 50-1.

with a newborn, Faulkner noted that the expression occurred elsewhere, with the meaning of ‘pure.’¹⁶⁹²

Next, just after the *psš-kf*, was the spell concerning the *ntwrj*-blades,¹⁶⁹³ elsewhere called *sbꜣj*. The spell identified these blades with Upper and Lower Egypt and used them to open the mouth. While Roth had theorized that the blades represented the fingers of a midwife,¹⁶⁹⁴ who would clear the mucus from the mouth of the newborn, the context of the following spells does not support this position. After spells which offered Unas pellets of incense (again southern and northern) and an unknown substance called *šjkw*, PT 32 offered two containers that represented the breast of Horus, represented by a jug of milk, and the breast of Isis, which was an empty jar. Roth had attributed these jars to the nursing of the newborn deceased,¹⁶⁹⁵ but it doesn’t make sense for the breast of the mother-goddess par excellence to be empty.

The next spell provided Unas with five cloves of garlic, which are said to be ‘teeth,’¹⁶⁹⁶ presumably the milk teeth of Horus.¹⁶⁹⁷ Roth had interpreted this passage as some sort of weaning ritual,¹⁶⁹⁸ but there is so far no evidence to support the existence of such a rite.

4.6.3 Summary

Given the archaeological evidence and grammatical analysis above, the *psš-kf* and *ntwrj*-blades of the Opening of the Mouth ceremony did not appear connected with ideas of fertility and childbirth. These objects did not occur in association with the known material culture of fertility

¹⁶⁹² Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, 7; For this expression cf. *lryt* ‘suckling calf’, Louvre C 17.

¹⁶⁹³ PT § 30b.

¹⁶⁹⁴ Roth, “The *psš-kf*,” 120; Roth, “Fingers, stars, and the ‘Opening of the Mouth,’” 63-5.

¹⁶⁹⁵ Roth, “The *psš-kf*,” 120.

¹⁶⁹⁶ PT § 35a.

¹⁶⁹⁷ Bardinot, *Dents et mâchoires*, 120-135.

¹⁶⁹⁸ Roth, “The *psš-kf*,” p. 121.

and the related medical-magical texts. Likewise, the primary owners of the *psš-kf* and Predynastic fishtail knives were not women, unlike the vast bulk of fertility-related objects.

4.7 Conclusion

From the archaeological context, one can associate only certain non-figural amulets and devices to fertility and birth, namely cowries, acacia-seed beads, and perhaps cylinder amulets. Such devices tended to have associations with other objects linked with fertility, such as female figurines. In addition, amulets found in association with women and children were more likely to function in a fertility context.

Cowries, cowrie-shaped amulets, and acacia-seed beads, being found in the tombs of women, appear to have been connected with concepts of female fertility. Amulets made from organic cowries and acacia seeds tended to belong to common people, while imitations in precious materials, inspired by these natural substances, were limited to the elite. However, the same type of object, regardless of material, occurred in elite and nonelite tomb contexts. While the former did not appear subject to temporal changes, the latter shifted from the more realistic imitations of the Middle Kingdom to the more stylized forms of the New Kingdom. Both objects showed high continuity, with cowries lasting from the Predynastic on, while acacia beads occurred from the Middle Kingdom to the mid-18th Dynasty. The main shift appears to have been on type of jewelry where they appeared. Whereas the Middle Kingdom saw both cowries and acacia-seed beads on girdles as part of a female-fertility iconography, the New Kingdom oversaw a standardization of birth imagery, with cowries integrated with other amulets, both birth-specific and otherwise, on necklaces. With their association with Hathor, “Mistress of the Vulva,” and appearance on nude female figurines, cowries were part of the overall iconography surrounding birth during the Middle and New Kingdoms. Given the increased presence of Hathor in daily-life cultic practices in the New Kingdom, cowries thus continued their connection to women. In

contrast, despite a connection between acacia and a fertility/birth relationship, acacia-seed beads generally did not appear linked with the larger New Kingdom imagery of birth, possibly due to its exclusive appearance on girdles.

While also found in primarily female contexts, there is less certainty surrounding the cylinder amulet cases, which cannot be securely linked with the later Third Intermediate Period amulet cases that contained spells for protecting children. Unlike the cowrie-shell amulets, no other objects depict the use of these cylinder amulets. Part of their meaning may lie in the copper and garnets found in some of the cases, the latter possibly invoking blood. Likewise, the choice of colored stones may also have posed significance, with the predominantly green and blue stones perhaps implying fertility. These amulets appeared only in the Middle Kingdom, likely because they had no clear association with the standard birth imagery characteristic of the New Kingdom.

There is similarly not currently enough evidence to indicate a connection between *tjt* amulets, which primarily date from the New Kingdom on, to the anti-miscarriage tampons discussed in spells from Papyrus BM 10059 and the Coffin Texts. The amulet did not appear particularly connected with women, and earlier representational evidence suggests the *tjt* had a symbolic connection to the *ʿnh*. Available evidence suggests a largely funerary function of the amulet, with rather little indication of a purpose in everyday life. It was only from the New Kingdom on that the *tjt* had clear association with Isis.

Finally, the *psš-kf*, *ntrwī*-blades, and related amulets of the Opening of the Mouth ceremony do not appear to be associated with birth and any ritual surrounding the cutting of the umbilical cord. Roth had based her theory on these objects based on analysis of the passages from the Pyramid Texts, though her interpretation of the relevant passages remain unproven. Indeed the archeological evidence does not align with such use. The Predynastic fishtail knives,

which Roth proposed were the inspiration for the *psš-kf*, belonged primarily to men, with no indication of a prior daily-life function. Likewise, the bifid initial shape of the *psš-kf* and the Deir el-Bersha mummy suggests the *psš-kf* served in mummification. The human-headed *psš-kf* amulets did not necessarily belong to women, while the other type of *psš-kf* amulet commonly occurred on the chest of the deceased, rather than the stomach. Thus, there is neither archaeological nor textual support for linking the *psš-kf* to women.

There is some textual evidence pertaining to the non-figural material discussed above. Some medical/magical spells mention acacia among their ingredients. Indeed, a number of medical/magical spells use natural materials, similar to how Egyptians used natural cowries and acacia-seeds. The use of color symbolism likewise was a characteristic magical practice, occurring both in texts and the cylinder beads. As discussed above, some scholars assumed the *tjt*-amulet functioned against miscarriage in part based on medical/magical spells using protective tampons. Other texts discuss the purchase of birth-specific materials, including certain amulets. Whereas the non-figural amulets discussed above predominantly pertained to fertility in general, the texts had more specific functions, ranging from testing fertility/pregnancy, preventing miscarriage, easing childbirth, and ensuring the survival of both mother and child.

Chapter 5: Texts discussing pregnancy and birth

5.1 Introduction

In order to fully discuss birth-specific objects, we must first make an examination of the relevant texts. While the bulk of the texts in our data set consist of medical/magical papyri, we will also investigate other sources, such as literary works like the tale of the birth of three princes in the Westcar Papyrus. This study focuses on the religious nature of practices surrounding birth, birth-related objects, and shifts and continuations in the texts.

From the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom, the medical/magical texts illustrate remarkable continuity, with many spells in Ebers, Papyrus Carlsberg, and Berlin 3038 derived from those in Papyrus Kahun.¹⁶⁹⁹ The spells often invoked the mythology of Isis' struggle to protect Horus from dangers and Hathor in her fertility-goddess aspect, both in their incantations and in the materials used. Some of the texts mentioned the objects in this study, particularly amulets such as knots, dwarf figurines, and various beads.

Among the Letters to the Dead are requests for a child, either for themselves or for a female relative. This type of appeal appeared on pots and potsherds like other Letters to the Dead, as well as on Middle Kingdom figurines of a woman holding a child. It is debatable whether the requests were for the deceased to act as a mediator or to actually engender the child. However, they clearly indicate a practice of appealing to a deceased relative to aid someone in fertility.

The birth of the three princes in Papyrus Westcar is the most in-depth description of childbirth from ancient Egypt available, in contrast to the representations of royal births occurring

¹⁶⁹⁹ See § 5.2.4. below.

on temple walls from the New Kingdom on,¹⁷⁰⁰ which depict only the successful aftermath of the birth. This literary text covered a range of practices, from dancers acting as midwives, the isolation of the woman from her husband at the time of birth, the use of birth bricks, and cutting the umbilical cord. Certain aspects, such as the meaning of the husband's unkempt kilt, are less clear and subject to interpretation.

However, evidence from texts detailing the absences of Deir el-Medina workmen from work and other records from the same place indicate that such gender isolation during childbirth was not universal. Such texts indicate that men in the community were involved in at least some of the births of their wives and daughters. They noted preparations prior to birth, such as obtaining a "woman's bed" and a "birth amulet," as well as feasts in honor of the successful mother.¹⁷⁰¹

Each of these texts under this study served differing functions and addressed different audiences. While Papyrus Westcar belonged to the royal and divine sphere, the Deir el-Medina texts concerned the private lives of residents of the town and the effect of life events on the attendance of workmen to their jobs. Likewise, the medical-magical texts aided medical/magical practitioners in addressing the everyday health concerns of their patients. Despite these differences, each type of texts contained information concerning childbirth and fertility practices, with mentioned object categories corresponding to those from the archaeological evidence.

5.2 Medical/magical texts

The medical/magical papyri had already been translated. While a few medical texts date to the Middle Kingdom, the majority of such literature derives from the New Kingdom,

¹⁷⁰⁰ See § 7.3.2 below.

¹⁷⁰¹ See § 5.5 below.

particularly the 18th Dynasty. A number of scholars examining Egyptian magic likewise had covered those spells pertaining to birth customs.¹⁷⁰² For interpretation of various aspects of magical practice, Ritner's work¹⁷⁰³ is the most extensive. Before discussing specific spells relating to pregnancy and birth, this section will focus on the administration of treatments, the nature of medicine in the texts and the principle of magic. A more specific analysis of spells and prescriptions pertaining to fertility and birth will follow.

Much of previous scholarship on Egyptian medicine, and even some modern works,¹⁷⁰⁴ had used the framework of modern medicine to judge the effectiveness of treatments and to attempt to diagnose the conditions mentioned in the spells and prescriptions. For example, Ebbell's¹⁷⁰⁵ translation of Ebers had often interpreted Egyptian diseases by relying on modern medical sense, such as assuming that *wnmt mhꜥt* "eater in the womb" meant cancer.¹⁷⁰⁶ In particular, some scholars had considered childbirth generally not to have been under the scope of medical practice.¹⁷⁰⁷ Strouhal, for example, had considered many of the spells from Berlin 3027 to be "superstitious or misleading."¹⁷⁰⁸ A number of scholars had distinguished between medicine

¹⁷⁰² Ex: P. Ghalioungui, *The House of Life: Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt* (Amsterdam: B. M. Israel, 1973), 111-115, 129; *ibid.*, "Les plus anciennes femmes-médecins de l'histoire." *BIFAO* 75 (1975): 159-164; J.F. Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian medicine* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), especially 191-4; Pinch, *Magic in ancient Egypt*; J. Richard-Alain and A-M. Loyrette, *La Mère, l'enfant et le lait en Égypte ancienne: traditions médico-religieuses; une étude de sénologie égyptienne (textes médicaux des papyrus Ramesseum nos. III et IV)* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2010); *ibid.*, "A propos des textes médicaux des Papyrus Ramesseum nos III et IV. La gynécologie," In *Encyclopédie religieuse de l'univers végétal: croyances phytoreligieuses de l'Égypte ancienne* 3, ed. Sydney H. Aufrère (Montpellier: Université Paul Valéry-Montpellier, 2005), pp. 351-489.

¹⁷⁰³ Ritner, *Mechanics*.

¹⁷⁰⁴ For example, Hansen, "Motherhood," 93-94; Strouhal, *Life*, 24; E. Strouhal and H. Vymazalová, "Mother and child care," in *Medicine of the ancient Egyptians*, ed. E. Strouhal, B. Vachala, and H. Vymazalová (Cairo; New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 172-201.

¹⁷⁰⁵ Bendix Ebbell, *The Papyrus Ebers: the greatest Egyptian medical document* (Copenhagen; London: Levin & Munksgaard; Oxford University Press, 1937).

¹⁷⁰⁶ Bendix Ebbell, "Die ägyptischen Krankheitsnamen," *ZÄS* 63 (1928): 73.

¹⁷⁰⁷ W.R. Dawson, *Magician and leech: a study in the beginnings of medicine with special reference to ancient Egypt* (London: Methuen, 1929), 102; I. Menascha, "Die Geburtshilfe bei den alten Ägyptern." *Arch. f. Gynäk.* 131 (1927): 434; J. Tyldesley, *Daughters of Isis* (London: Viking, 1994), 72-73.

¹⁷⁰⁸ Strouhal, *Life of the Ancient Egyptians*, 24.

for ailments with obvious natural causes, such as aches, pains, and sores, versus the magical means used for less visible medical problems.¹⁷⁰⁹

However, Egyptian medicine and magic did appear to have been separate entities, especially since many spells incorporated incantations with prescriptions or case studies as a composite whole.¹⁷¹⁰ The terminology of treating ailments in the medical-magical papyri did not refer to the outcome as "treated" or "cured", but rather "smashed, driven out, killed," indicating the defeat or assuaging of an illness spirit.¹⁷¹¹ Similar to some of the spells pertaining to women and children, other medico-magical spells named specific demons for different body parts.¹⁷¹² For example, *nsy.t* attacked the belly,¹⁷¹³ while *hsk* caused deafness.¹⁷¹⁴ Deities and dead people were noted for causing eye diseases,¹⁷¹⁵ and *ꜥꜥ* disease,¹⁷¹⁶ among others.¹⁷¹⁷ Attempts to distinguish so-called "rational elements" from these texts have proven to be generally problematic. Honey, for example is known to be an effective antiseptic due to its hypertonic property and gluconic acid and hydrogen peroxide (mildly antibacterial).¹⁷¹⁸ Yet, its use in Berlin 3027 B did not rely on this principle.¹⁷¹⁹ There were even incantations over instruments such as measuring jars, such as Hearst 213 and 216.¹⁷²⁰ Spells often instructed invocations to be spoken

¹⁷⁰⁹ J.W. Estes, *The medical skills of ancient Egypt* (Canton, MA: Science History Publications, 1993), 78, 94, 97-8; P. Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1963), 40-1, 49; Watterson, *Women in ancient Egypt*, 74-76; J. A. Wilson, "Medicine in ancient Egypt," *Bull. Hist. Med.* 36 (1962, Mar.-Apr.): 116-7.

¹⁷¹⁰ J. Walker, "The place of magic in the practice of Egyptian medicine," *BACE* 1 (1990): 87.

¹⁷¹¹ Walker, "The place of magic," 87.

¹⁷¹² S. Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics of ancient Egyptian pharmacology: a statistic analysis of papyrus Ebers and cross-cultural medical thinking* (BAR International Series 2272. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2011), 27.

¹⁷¹³ Ebers 209.

¹⁷¹⁴ Ebers 844e.

¹⁷¹⁵ Ebers 209.

¹⁷¹⁶ Berlin 3038, spell 58.

¹⁷¹⁷ Ebers 99, 225, 229.

¹⁷¹⁸ Estes, *The medical skills of ancient Egypt*, 69; Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics*, 39.

¹⁷¹⁹ H.E. Sigerist, *A History of Medicine*, vol. 7 (New York, Oxford University Press, 1951), 283; Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics*, 39.

¹⁷²⁰ Walker, "The place of magic," 87, with translations of the spells in question.

during medical treatment, like the drinking remedy Ebers 3 and the application of ointment in Ebers 1 (= Hearst 78), which was typically applied closest to the suffering area.¹⁷²¹

Identifying with a deity made up a whole class of procedures.¹⁷²² Given that Egyptians considered Isis powerful/knowledgeable enough to reassemble and revive Osiris, medical-magical texts commonly summoned her, with the sick person identified with Osiris.¹⁷²³ More commonly, medical/magical texts invoked her, serving as the physician, to treat the patient, who was equated with Horus. An example of this process¹⁷²⁴ was the spell against burns from Pap. Med. London XIV, 8-14, which instructed the physician to recite while administering a prescription the story of Isis healing the burns of Horus. Specialized deities became involved with other kinds of illness. One invoked Meret-Seger, for example, against venomous bites.¹⁷²⁵ At times, the conjurer was the god, "Look, I am Horus, the healer, soothing the god."¹⁷²⁶ Other times, the text would center a divine property on the patient, "O enemy, male or female...Descend not upon the head of N., son of N., for his head is the head of Re himself...Beware lest the gods suffer, for then darkness will fall, clouds will obscure the sky, and water shall overspread the earth."¹⁷²⁷

Some medical-magical texts from the Old Kingdom through the Greco-Roman period deified each part of the patient's body.¹⁷²⁸ In these, the deities were not the same for each body

¹⁷²¹ Walker, "The place of magic," 89.

¹⁷²² Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 38.

¹⁷²³ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 32.

¹⁷²⁴ J. Assmann, "Magie und Ritual im Alten Ägypten," in *Magie und Religion*, ed. Jan Assmann and Harald Strohm (Lindauer Symposien für Religionsforschung 1. München: Wilhelm Fink, 2010), 35.

¹⁷²⁵ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 34. See CT spell 156.

¹⁷²⁶ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 38, note 19.

¹⁷²⁷ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, vs. 4, 3-4.

¹⁷²⁸ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 38, note 27.

part and differ according to the date, deity popularity, and selection of local deities of the text.¹⁷²⁹

In one form, the body parts belonged to a god, “Your head is the head of Horus of the Rising sun; your face is the face of Mekhenty-Inty...”¹⁷³⁰ The second form had each limb being a god, “The summit of your head is Re; your back of the head is Osiris...your ears are two king-snakes; your arm is Horus; your navel is the morning star; each limb is god and each god protects your name.”¹⁷³¹ In these lists, pairs of body parts were linked to mythologically paired deities, such as Isis and Nephthys for the thighs.¹⁷³² Egyptians considered Isis especially sympathetic, having suffered an endangered pregnancy, and attributed to her spells to accelerate childbirth.¹⁷³³

Egyptians also used sacerdotal magic, where some material acquired therapeutic property based on their associations with divinities in myths.¹⁷³⁴ For example, lettuce was linked to Min due to its milky sap and with the impregnation of Seth from the Contendings of Horus and Seth, where the god ate the plant.¹⁷³⁵ Thus, it makes sense in its appearance in Ebers 467, a spell for hair growth, since baldness was a male trait.¹⁷³⁶ This sacerdotal property also applied to the use of the ibis of wax for fumigation for the womb in Ebers 795, which reflected the role of Thoth in assisting Isis.¹⁷³⁷ Physicians often employed animal materials in spells, especially cows, geese, asses, humans, cats, and pigs, indicating magical/religious associations.¹⁷³⁸ Egyptians believed

¹⁷²⁹ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 38; J. Walker, “Egyptian medicine and the gods,” *BACE* 4 (1993): 83. For variations of such deifications in the Coffin Texts, see B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus in den Sargetexten* (GOF IV Bd. 7; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1975), 250-256.

¹⁷³⁰ *PT* § 148.

¹⁷³¹ Berlin 3027, Rs. 4,8-5,7.

¹⁷³² Walker, “Egyptian medicine and the gods,”

¹⁷³³ R. Ritner, “A uterine amulet in the Oriental Institute collection,” *JARCE* 43.3 (1984): 217; Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I* 348, 30-1 (verso 11, 2-8, spell 34).

¹⁷³⁴ Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics*, 38.

¹⁷³⁵ W.R. Dawson, “Studies in the Egyptian medical texts,” *JEA* 18.3/4 (1932b): 152; M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. II (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 220; L. Manniche, *An ancient Egyptian herbal* (London: British Museum Publications, 1989), 113.

¹⁷³⁶ Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics*, 38.

¹⁷³⁷ Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics*, 38.

¹⁷³⁸ Estes, *The medical skills of ancient Egypt*, 104, table 6.

that a special quality of an organism resided in its tissues or fluids, and then these parts could be used to cause such qualities in the patient, such as stallion saliva for increasing female libido or urine of a pregnant woman for causing fields to grow.¹⁷³⁹ The same principle applied to the milk of a mother who bore a boy, which represented Isis' milk, in spells for curing burns.¹⁷⁴⁰

Another concept in the spells was similarity, where like was used to cure like, such as a woman with a painful vulva that emits a burnt meat smell was treated with a fumigation with burnt meat.¹⁷⁴¹ The use of puns also occurred in these texts,¹⁷⁴² and Gardiner¹⁷⁴³ had cited Berlin 3027, recto 2.4: "I make a charm for him against thee of *ʕjy*-plant, which does injury, of onions, which destroy thee, and of honey, which is sweet to men and sour to the dead." He had stated that the property of onions was due to the fact that the Egyptian word for onions was *ḥḏw* and phonetically similar to "to destroy" *ḥḏi*.¹⁷⁴⁴ Long had noted that the use of *njz* plant against *njz*-disease in Ebers 762 was based on a "sympathie phonétique entre deux termes qui ajoute sa vertu homéopathique à l'efficacité chimique du remède par l'evocateur magique des mots."¹⁷⁴⁵

Transference was the situation when a medication absorbed evil or transferred it to another being or object.¹⁷⁴⁶ For example, Egyptians treated migraine by rubbing the aching side with the head of a fried fish to transfer the pain to the fish.¹⁷⁴⁷ The transference of a disease to a

¹⁷³⁹ Estes, *The medical skills of ancient Egypt*, 104-5.

¹⁷⁴⁰ Estes, *The medical skills of ancient Egypt*, 106; Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics*, 35, citing Ebers 499 -500.

¹⁷⁴¹ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 35; K, 5-8, no.2.

¹⁷⁴² Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics*, 37.

¹⁷⁴³ A. Gardiner, "Magic (Egyptian)," in *Encyclopedia of religion and ethics* 8, ed. J. Hastings (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1915), 265-6.

¹⁷⁴⁴ Gardiner, "Magic," 265-266.

¹⁷⁴⁵ B. Long, "A propos de l'usage des menthes dans l'Égypte ancienne," *Mélanges Adolphe Gutbub*, ed. A. Gutbub (Montpellier : Université de Montpellier, 1984), 147.

¹⁷⁴⁶ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 35.

¹⁷⁴⁷ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 35, citing Ebers 250.

medium also occurred with Ebers 356, wherein an incantation and prescription in the treatment for blindness relocated the disease into a hog's eye.¹⁷⁴⁸

In spells with a rubric, Egyptians used the color red to indicate something “dangerous,” as well as marking the beginning of a new spell.¹⁷⁴⁹ Certain colors played an important element in some spells,¹⁷⁵⁰ as well as in some objects like nude female figurines, cylinder amulets, and *tjt*-knot amulets.¹⁷⁵¹ These colors include black, white, red, and green.¹⁷⁵² In Papyrus Ebers, Isis appealed to be protected from “red things,” which is evidence that the color represented evil and was dangerous in this context.¹⁷⁵³

Egyptians considered the uttering of the name of a hostile entity in a spell as a threat and an act of domination.¹⁷⁵⁴ One such example was in spell V of Papyrus Berlin 3027,¹⁷⁵⁵ “I know them, I know them; I know henceforth their names, but they are not known to him who plans evil against that child...” If the name was not known, the healer tried to learn it, as Isis did while treating Re, such as asking “are you a servant?...go out in the vomit...are you a noble? Go out in the urine.”¹⁷⁵⁶ In cases where the exact illness-causing force was not known, certain spells listed a whole litany of potential enemies, with Ebers 131 even adding “and any other citable influences.”¹⁷⁵⁷ Ebers 2 similarly documented any deity, dead person, or living enemy who could

¹⁷⁴⁸ Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics*, 38.

¹⁷⁴⁹ Joanna Kyffin, “‘A true secret of the House of Life’: Prosody, intertext, and performance in magical texts,” in *Narratives of Egypt and the ancient Near East: Literary and linguistic approaches*, ed. F. Hagen et al. (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 474-475.

¹⁷⁵⁰ Pinch, “Red things,” 183.

¹⁷⁵¹ See §§ 3.2.3-7, 4.4, and 4.5, respectively.

¹⁷⁵² Pinch, “Red things,” 182.

¹⁷⁵³ Pinch, “Red things,” 182; R. Lefevre, “La fondazione del Museo Gregoriano Egizio al Vaticano,” in *Gregorio XVI: miscellanea commemorativa ... in occasione del centenario della morte di Gregorio XVI* 1, ed. Anonymous (Roma: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1949), 74; *Grundriß* V, 533

¹⁷⁵⁴ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 37.

¹⁷⁵⁵ P. Berlin 2037, Rs. 6,5.

¹⁷⁵⁶ Berlin 3027, Spell D, 2,9.

¹⁷⁵⁷ Walker, “Egyptian medicine and the gods,” 86.

be "the ones who might oppose me."¹⁷⁵⁸ The Execration Texts, which date from the Old Kingdom through the Late Period, also placed importance on naming, targeting any enemy who may rebel against Egypt.¹⁷⁵⁹

There is notable evidence of copying among the medical texts, such as similarly worded spells in different papyri and groups of paragraphs, as well as parallels in content such as spells in Papyrus Kahun appearing elsewhere.¹⁷⁶⁰ In Ebers in particular, the term *gm wš* "found destroyed" occurred in spells, written in red ink, such as in Ebers 57, 738, and 755, which did not make grammatical or contextual sense in the text.¹⁷⁶¹ There was evidence of classification with some texts focused on certain ailments.¹⁷⁶² Ebers, Hearst, Berlin 3038, and London mainly focused for internal and external ailments.¹⁷⁶³ Ebers was particularly well organized, with sections on the abdomen, skin, rectal issues, urinary problems, eyes, women, and wounds. Scholars, such as Nunn,¹⁷⁶⁴ had noted that Egyptian medical practice seem to have remained relatively the same from the Old Kingdom through the Late Period, likely due to a conservative culture.

5.2.1 Middle Kingdom Medical/Magical Texts

While the bulk of the known medical-magical texts date to the New Kingdom, many of the spells they recorded date back to Middle Kingdom antecedents. The latter, in turn, likely originated in the small groups of anti-snake spells from the Old Kingdom.¹⁷⁶⁵ During the Middle Kingdom, much of the classical vocabulary of magical texts appeared, as well as mythical

¹⁷⁵⁸ Walker, "Egyptian medicine and the gods," 87.

¹⁷⁵⁹ Ritner, *Mechanics*, 136-144, esp. 139-140.

¹⁷⁶⁰ Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics*, 55.

¹⁷⁶¹ Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics*, 55.

¹⁷⁶² Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics*, 59.

¹⁷⁶³ W. Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin* (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 1999), 545.

¹⁷⁶⁴ Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*, 206.

¹⁷⁶⁵ PT Sp. 226-244; 276-299; 314; 375-401; 499; 502; 727-733. J. F. Borghouts, "Lexicographical aspects of magical texts," In *Textcorpus und Wörterbuch: Aspekte zur ägyptischen Lexikographie*, ed. S. Grunert and I. Hafemann (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1999), 155-157.

incidences.¹⁷⁶⁶ The 12th Dynasty Kahun Papyrus¹⁷⁶⁷ had a long section examining various feminine medical issues, including a pregnancy test and spells pertaining to childbirth. The third page of the Kahun papyrus discussed 17 prescriptions assessing a woman's fertility and/or pregnancy status and ascertaining the sex of the unborn child.¹⁷⁶⁸ The section included a spell that treated pregnancy-related pain,¹⁷⁶⁹ while another cured bleeding which either was caused from the placenta after birth or a uterine disease.¹⁷⁷⁰ Of 29 materials used in the Kahun Papyrus, 14% went into the vagina by fumigation, and 31% manual application, while 24% was consumed orally, and 24% were for external application.¹⁷⁷¹ Watterson had noted that this section of the text provided no surgical methods.¹⁷⁷² Papyrus Ramesseum III, one of the papyri found in a 12th Dynasty tomb under the Ramesseum, had a long section of spells and remedies for a mother and child, while the larger fragment of Papyrus Ramesseum IV, another of these papyri, contained spells for protecting a newborn, a prognosis of infant viability, and destroyed remnants of a spell about pregnancy and birth.¹⁷⁷³ These Ramesseum papyri encompassed the first spells against dead persons, enemies henceforth always described as enemies in the medico-magical papyri.¹⁷⁷⁴

5.2.2 New Kingdom Medical/Magical Texts

A significant portion of papyri dating to the New Kingdom had gynecological sections, with the Ebers, Berlin 3038, and Carlsberg papyri containing formulae that are so similar to those of the Kahun Papyrus that a number of scholars had contended that they all originally came from

¹⁷⁶⁶ Borghouts, "Lexicographical aspects," 158.

¹⁷⁶⁷ Thierry Bardinnet, *Les papyrus médicaux de l'Égypte pharaonique* (Paris : Fayard, 1995), 437-443; F. Reinhard, "Gynäkologie und Geburtshilfe," *AGM* 10 (1917): 148-153.

¹⁷⁶⁸ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 48.

¹⁷⁶⁹ Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin*, 414 (Kah 9).

¹⁷⁷⁰ Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin*, 416-417 (Kah 17).

¹⁷⁷¹ Estes, *The medical skills of ancient Egypt*, 98.

¹⁷⁷² Watterson, *Women in ancient Egypt*, 75, 77.

¹⁷⁷³ Bardinnet, *Les papyrus médicaux*, 466-470, 471-2; A. Gardiner, *The Ramesseum Papyrus* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1955). Grammatical commentary in J.W. Barns, *Five Ramesseum Papyri* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1956), 16-29.

¹⁷⁷⁴ Borghouts, "Lexicographical aspects," 157.

the same source.¹⁷⁷⁵ The Ebers papyrus,¹⁷⁷⁶ an 18th Dynasty text that probably came from the archive of Ramses II in the Ramesseum,¹⁷⁷⁷ had a section which included spells relating to childbirth and breast-milk production, as well as two prognoses about the viability of a newborn child. Interestingly, based on the grammar the papyrus used for some of the spells, Quack had argued that at least part of the text originally dated to the Middle Kingdom.¹⁷⁷⁸ Examples included how to recognize good milk from bad, and to loosen the child in the belly of a woman.¹⁷⁷⁹ Another relevant text is Papyrus BM 10059,¹⁷⁸⁰ dating to the end of the 18th Dynasty, part of which discussed how to prevent bleeding during pregnancy that could lead to miscarriage. This papyrus supposedly came from the temple of Tebmut.¹⁷⁸¹ The text linked the potential threat of miscarriage to the attempts of Seth to terminate Horus, while the latter was still in the womb. Examination of the original by Leitz reveals that Wreszinski erred in numbering the columns, since he published the papyrus glazing in two separate frames, ordering the spells in order of the frames, rather than giving the whole recto followed by the whole verso.¹⁷⁸² The *Grundriß der Medizin* kept the same arrangement.¹⁷⁸³ For this papyrus, the search for specific words is difficult, and the text is "in many respects a nightmare for the interpreter."¹⁷⁸⁴

Papyrus Berlin 3038, dating to the 19th Dynasty, had a gynecological section which contained seven prognoses (#193-199) for pregnancy, which is parallel to that of Papyrus Carlsberg VIII, which dates to the 19th-20th Dynasties.¹⁷⁸⁵ Records associated with the former

¹⁷⁷⁵ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science of ancient Egypt*, 45; Watterson, *Women in ancient Egypt*, 76.

¹⁷⁷⁶ Bardinot, *Les papyrus médicaux de l'Égypte pharaonique*, 251-373 and 443-446.

¹⁷⁷⁷ Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin*, 22.

¹⁷⁷⁸ J.F. Quack, "Magie und Totenbuch: eine Fallstudie (p Ebers 2, 1-6)," *CdÉ* 74.147 (1999): 16.

¹⁷⁷⁹ Meskell, *Private life in New Kingdom Egypt*, 65; G. Robins, "Women & children in peril: pregnancy, birth & infant mortality in ancient Egypt," *KMT* 5.4 (1994-1995): 26.

¹⁷⁸⁰ Bardinot, *Les papyrus médicaux de l'Égypte pharaonique*, 483-492.

¹⁷⁸¹ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 50.

¹⁷⁸² Leitz, *Magical and medical papyri*, 1.




¹⁷⁸³ *Grundriß* IV.1, 280.

¹⁷⁸⁴ Borghouts, "Lexicographical aspects," 161-162.

¹⁷⁸⁵ Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin*, 44, 48.

claim excavators in Saqqara found the papyrus in an old chest containing antique writings.¹⁷⁸⁶

The verso of Berlin papyrus was much like the section from the Kahun Papyrus discussing assessment of fertility and of pregnancy.¹⁷⁸⁷

Probably the most relevant such text for the purpose of this dissertation is the 18th Dynasty papyrus Berlin 3027,¹⁷⁸⁸ titled “Magical Spells for Mother and Child,” which, as the title suggests, is a collection of spells that pertained to magic/medical treatment for pregnancy, childbirth, and continued health of the child. While the paleography indicated the papyrus dated to the 18th Dynasty,¹⁷⁸⁹ the language was Middle Egyptian with occasional Late Egyptian features, as seen in the use of *rw-pw* , the spellings of *hbj.t*  (3, 3) and *psj*  “to boil” (8, 2), and the use of the active pseudoparticiples in the 1st person (5, 10).¹⁷⁹⁰ It was possibly composed in the Middle Kingdom.¹⁷⁹¹ From the paleography, Erman and Yamazaki had noted that the papyrus was written in two different hands, with the first part written in a larger and fuller script.¹⁷⁹² While the spells from the first hand pertained to the childhood illnesses *nšw* and *tmyt*, the second book consisted of 15 pages and covered the topics of birth and illnesses of infants.

Papyrus Leiden I 348, allegedly found in Memphis, had sections on headaches, belly-pains, bad dreams, and, notably, a section on spells to accelerate (*sh3h*) birth. Thirteen columns were on the recto and 12 on the verso, with spells on the recto continuing immediately on two

¹⁷⁸⁶ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 49.

¹⁷⁸⁷ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 48.

¹⁷⁸⁸ Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mütter und Kind*.

¹⁷⁸⁹ While Erman (*Zaubersprüche*, 6.) had dated the text to Hyksos Period to the beginning of the New Kingdom, Yamazaki (*Zaubersprüche*, 2, Table 2.) had noted the text had closer similarity to the paleography of texts dating to the reigns of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II.

¹⁷⁹⁰ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 3.

¹⁷⁹¹ Szpakowska, *Daily life in ancient Egypt*, 31.

¹⁷⁹² Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mütter und Kind*, 6-7; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 2, Table 1.

more pages of the verso.¹⁷⁹³ The verso likely had originally been a model letter, then reused for magic spells, so part of it was washed off on the recto, and texts were enlarged by pasting.¹⁷⁹⁴ The handwriting of the magical sections suggests a 19th Dynasty date, which is similar to that of Papyrus Chester Beatty.¹⁷⁹⁵

5.2.3 Staff of pregnancy and birth

Before delving into the conditions of pregnancy and birth and their treatments, it is important to note who would have participated in such activities. Were these the concerns for trained midwives, physicians, and/or female relatives? To what extent were the magical practices mentioned in the medical-magical texts accessible to non-elites?

Some scholars had contended that only midwives were involved in the birth process, without any male physicians.¹⁷⁹⁶ This position, however, ignores that Papyrus Berlin 3027 mentions a lector priest in spell F, and the environment appeared to have been in an elite household, with a male magician on staff.¹⁷⁹⁷ It seems difficult to see any separation between a physician, priest, or magician.¹⁷⁹⁸ In fact, priesthoods of certain deities, such as Sekhmet, were particularly known as physicians in at least the New Kingdom.¹⁷⁹⁹

The male title "magician of the nursery" (*ḥkꜣy n kꜣp*) reveals the prominence of male practitioners even within female spaces.¹⁸⁰⁰ There are three examples of this title occurring in

¹⁷⁹³ Borghouts, *The magical texts of Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 2-3.

¹⁷⁹⁴ Borghouts, *The magical texts of Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 3.

¹⁷⁹⁵ Ibid.


¹⁷⁹⁶ Estes, *The medical skills of ancient Egypt*, 55-56; Rand, "Figure-vases in ancient Egypt," 209; W. Dawson, "Medicine and surgery in ancient Egypt," *Asiatic Review* NS 22 (1926): 165-176; Tyldesley, *Daughters of Isis*, 72-73; Strouhal and Vymazalová, "Mother and child care," 136.

¹⁷⁹⁷ Ritner, "Household religion in ancient Egypt," 176.

¹⁷⁹⁸ Ritner, *Mechanics*, 220-233; Wilson, "Medicine in ancient Egypt," 116.

¹⁷⁹⁹ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 31.

¹⁸⁰⁰ Ritner, "Household religion in ancient Egypt," 176.

Middle Kingdom stelae: one from Stuttgart, Stele Leyden V 105, and Turin no. 130.¹⁸⁰¹ The writing  otherwise only appeared in the noble title *hṛd n kꜣp*, “child of the nursery.”¹⁸⁰² One relief from the 18th Dynasty tomb of Bebi at el-Kab, which we will discuss below, seems to preserve evidence of female magicians.¹⁸⁰³

While some scholars had interpreted ancient Egyptian medical-magical practice as limited to trained experts,¹⁸⁰⁴ others had stated that magical practice was not limited to purely elite contexts.¹⁸⁰⁵ While there was ancient evidence that Egyptians considered certain magical texts restricted,¹⁸⁰⁶ the use of amulets and magical images,¹⁸⁰⁷ and a passage from the Middle Kingdom Teachings of Merikare¹⁸⁰⁸ suggest that a wider population used magic. Indeed, several medical-magical and magical spells from the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom phrased the evocation part in the first person, as if the patient spoke the spell.¹⁸⁰⁹ From the Old Kingdom, tombs preserve reliefs of herding scenes, where one individual invoked a water spell to protect the herd from crocodiles in the river.¹⁸¹⁰ While Ritner had pointed out a figure on the river bank

¹⁸⁰¹ A. Gardiner, “Professional magicians,” *PSBA* 39 (1917): 32-33.

¹⁸⁰² E. Lefébure, “Sur différents mots et noms Égyptiens,” *PSBA* 13 (1890-1891): 447-469.

¹⁸⁰³ Ritner, “Household religion in ancient Egypt,” 176; see § 6.3.2.2.2.

¹⁸⁰⁴ Ritner, *Mechanics*, 204-7; Westendorf, *Handbuch*, 524.

¹⁸⁰⁵ Kyffin, “‘A true secret of the House of Life,’” 243-244; D. Sweeney, “Illnesses and Healer in Combat in Middle Kingdom and early New Kingdom Medical Texts,” in *Feinde und Aufrüher: Konzepte von Gegnerschaft in ägyptischen Texten besonders des Mittleren Reiches*, ed. H. Felber (ASAW 78.5; Leipzig, 2005), 153-157.

¹⁸⁰⁶ J.R. Baines, “Restricted Knowledge, Hierarchy, and Decorum: Modern Perceptions and Ancient Institutions,” *JARCE* 27 (1990): 1-23; *Admonitions* 6, 6-7. Pinch (*Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 63) noted that, while some Egyptian texts stated that unauthorized reading of magic books carried the death penalty, much funerary and everyday magic was adapted from these very texts, and so the threats should not be taken at face value.

¹⁸⁰⁷ Sweeney, “Illnesses and Healer in Combat,” 153; Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 42.

¹⁸⁰⁸ Lines 136-137; J.F. Quack, *Studien zur Lehre für Merikare* (GOF 23; Wiesbaden, 1992), 78-81.

¹⁸⁰⁹ Sweeney, “Illnesses and Healer in Combat,” 155-6, citing Ebers cases 1, 3, 131, and 384, P. Turin 54003 v. 6-7 (MK), and rituals to ward off the plague of the year (18.11-16, 19.18-20.8, 20.8-12).

¹⁸¹⁰ Kyffin, “‘A true secret of the House of Life,’” 244; J.R. Ogdon, “Studies in Egyptian magical thought I: the hand and the seal,” *DE* 1 (1985): 27-8; Ritner, *Mechanics*, 225.

who may be a magician,¹⁸¹¹ other scenes illustrate one of the herdsmen reciting the spell.¹⁸¹²

References to a chief lector priest that occurred in Papyrus Harris and the Ramesseum cache, and a possible Kahun spell,¹⁸¹³ indicate a context of ownership and performance by a magician-priest.¹⁸¹⁴ For birth, particularly for non-elite women, probably female family members, friends, neighbors, and servants would have assisted.

Certain scholars had doubted that there were trained midwives,¹⁸¹⁵ and it appears that no gynecologists or midwives are mentioned in the medical texts and list of physicians.¹⁸¹⁶ Though Toivari-Viitala had speculated that the "knowing woman," *tꜣ rḥt*, mentioned in some texts in Deir el-Medina, might have performed magic during births,¹⁸¹⁷ there is currently no evidence to support this contention. This lack of mentioned specialists in women's health is curious since, as Ghalioungui noted in the publication of Peseshet's tomb, her title proves that women, at least in the Old Kingdom, had access to the medical profession.¹⁸¹⁸

However, there are three cases from the Old Kingdom of women bearing a title, *inꜥ.t*, which may have meant "midwife": a detail from the false door of a mastaba in Giza illustrating a woman with her titles (Figure 217),¹⁸¹⁹ an offering basin for an *imy(t)-r inꜥ.wt* "overseer of *inꜥ.t*-

¹⁸¹¹ Ritner, *Mechanics*, 27. See also R.B. Parkinson, *The Tale of Sinuhe and other ancient Egyptian poems, 1940-1640 BC*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1997), 287.

¹⁸¹² Kyffin, "'A true secret of the House of Life,'" 244; Sweeney, "Illnesses and Healer in Combat," 157.

¹⁸¹³ R. Gilliam, *Performance and drama in ancient Egypt* (Ann Arbor, MI: Duckworth Publishers, 2005), 62.

¹⁸¹⁴ Kyffin, "'A true secret of the House of Life,'" 244.

¹⁸¹⁵ Janssen and Janssen, *Growing up in ancient Egypt*, 6.

¹⁸¹⁶ Ghalioungui, *The Physicians of pharaonic Egypt* (Mainz: Philip von Zablen), 45; Watterson, *Women in ancient Egypt*, 74.

¹⁸¹⁷ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 179.

¹⁸¹⁸ Ghalioungui, *The Physicians of pharaonic Egypt*, 45. For Peseshet, see P. Ghalioungui, "Les plus anciennes femmes-médecins de l'histoire," *BIFAO* 75 (1975): 159-164.

¹⁸¹⁹ H.G. Fischer, *Egyptian Studies III: Varia Nova* (New York: MMA, 1996), 238-239, figs. 1-2; *ibid.*, *Egyptian Women of the Old Kingdom And of the Heracleopolitan Period* (2nd ed.; New York: MMA, 2000), 27, fig. 24.

women” (Figure 218),¹⁸²⁰ and another offering basin,¹⁸²¹ damaged at the title, which appears to show the same “overseer of *in*^c.*t*-women” as the other basin. The determinative represents a seated woman who holds out in front of her a rectangular object with both hands and wears her hair in a kerchief. Fischer had noted this rectangular object may have represented a birth brick.¹⁸²² Likewise, the bound hair, otherwise recorded in tomb scenes of women engaged in menial tasks,¹⁸²³ would befit the work of a midwife.¹⁸²⁴ Fischer remarked that, should *in*^c.*t* have meant “midwife,” it may well be related to *mn*^c.*t* “wet-nurse,”¹⁸²⁵ in which case the formative *m* would have replaced the initial *w* or *l*.¹⁸²⁶

¹⁸²⁰ H.G. Fischer, *Egyptian Studies I: Varia* (New York: MMA, 1976), 72 (24); *ibid.*, *Egyptian Women*, 27, fig. 25. Drawing by Peter Der Manuelian.

¹⁸²¹ P. Kaplony, “Neues Material zu einer Prosopographie des Alten Reiches,” *MIO* 14 (1968): 197-8, fig. 4 and pl. 3; Fischer, *Egyptian Women*, 28, fig. 26.

¹⁸²² Fischer, *Egyptian Women*, 27.

¹⁸²³ Ex: Junker, *Giza XI*, fig. 64; H. Wild, *Tombeau de Ti III: La Chapelle* (MIFAO 65; Cairo: IFAO, 1966), pl. 155; W.K. Simpson, *The Offering Chapel of Sekhem-Ankh-Ptah* (Boston: MFA, 1976), pls. D and 16d.

¹⁸²⁴ Fischer, *Egyptian Women*, 27-28.

¹⁸²⁵ Fischer, *Egyptian Women*, 27.

¹⁸²⁶ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, § 290.

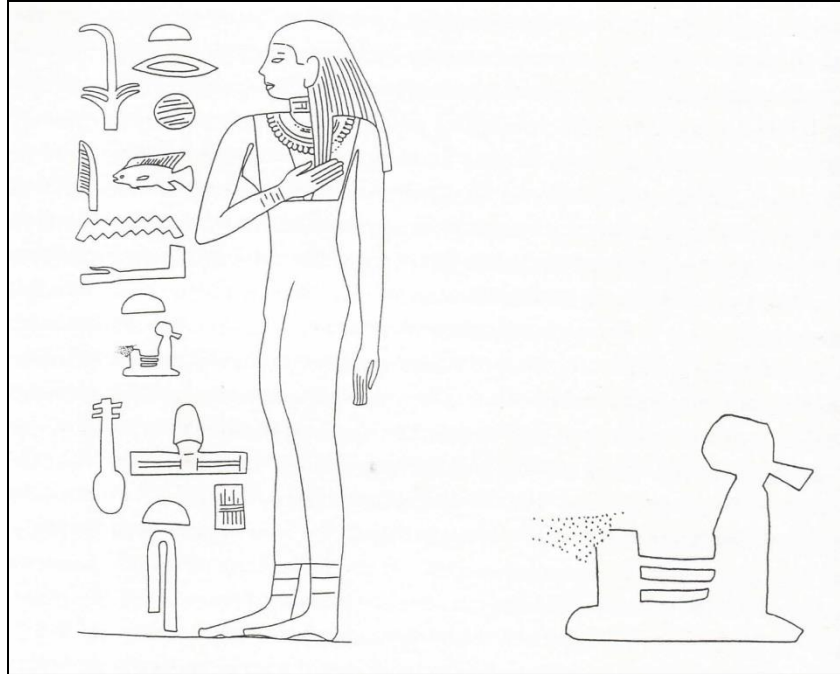





Figure 217 – Detail of a false door from a mastaba in Giza. Image from Fischer, *Women in the Old Kingdom*, fig. 24.

In the Middle Kingdom, there were three known titles for nurses:¹⁸²⁷ *ꜣtj.t* (

,¹⁸²⁸ *mn̓.t* (),¹⁸²⁹ and *hnmt.t* (), with the latter

attested mostly from the New Kingdom on and with a single exception referred to a divine nurse who can be male or female.¹⁸³⁰ The relief from the New Kingdom tomb of Bebi labelled women as *hnmt.t* “nurses,” each holding a serpent staff and tusk in front of the tomb owners. The first two terms in the group of three were more prevalent in the Middle Kingdom, but their precise definitions are still uncertain, with *mn̓.t* possibly a wet-nurse based on the breast

¹⁸²⁷ Szpakowska, *Daily life in ancient Egypt*, 36.

¹⁸²⁸ *Wb.* I, 23.10; Hannig, *Äg. Wb.* I, 22; *ibid.*, II, 50.

¹⁸²⁹ *Wb.* II, 78.1-9; Hannig, *Äg. Wb.* I, 531-2; *ibid.*, II, 1073-4; L. Lesko, *Dict. LE* I, 219.

¹⁸³⁰ Szpakowska, *Daily life in ancient Egypt*, 36; see *Wb.* III, 294.2-3; Hannig, *Äg. Wb.* I, 952; *ibid.* II, 1896.

determinative.¹⁸³¹ While the specific title of “midwife” did not occur after the Old Kingdom, the context for these terms indicate that some of these nurses may have functioned as such.

Strouhal, however, had maintained a perceived idea that medical texts excluded evidence for doctors specializing in obstetrics and any mention of midwives. He then concluded that Egyptians considered midwifery unclean and held it in low esteem.¹⁸³² However, he had assumed that Egyptians would have divided medical specialties at that time in a way similar to that in modern times. Likewise, two of the Old Kingdom women with the title *in.t* also held the title *rh.t nswt* “known to the king” (Figures 217 and 218) meaning they held some status.¹⁸³³ Finally, he had left out evidence from the birth story in Papyrus Westcar and of the *hnrt*-dancers that would indicate some status connected with birth practices, with major goddesses disguised as dancers to administer birth in the former.¹⁸³⁴

¹⁸³¹ Szpakowska, *Daily life in ancient Egypt*, 36.

¹⁸³² Janssen and Janssen, *Growing up in ancient Egypt*, 7; Strouhal, *Life of the Ancient Egyptians*, 17.

¹⁸³³ Fischer, *Egyptian Women*, 27, figs. 24-25.

¹⁸³⁴ For the *hnrt*-dancers, see § 3.2.1.

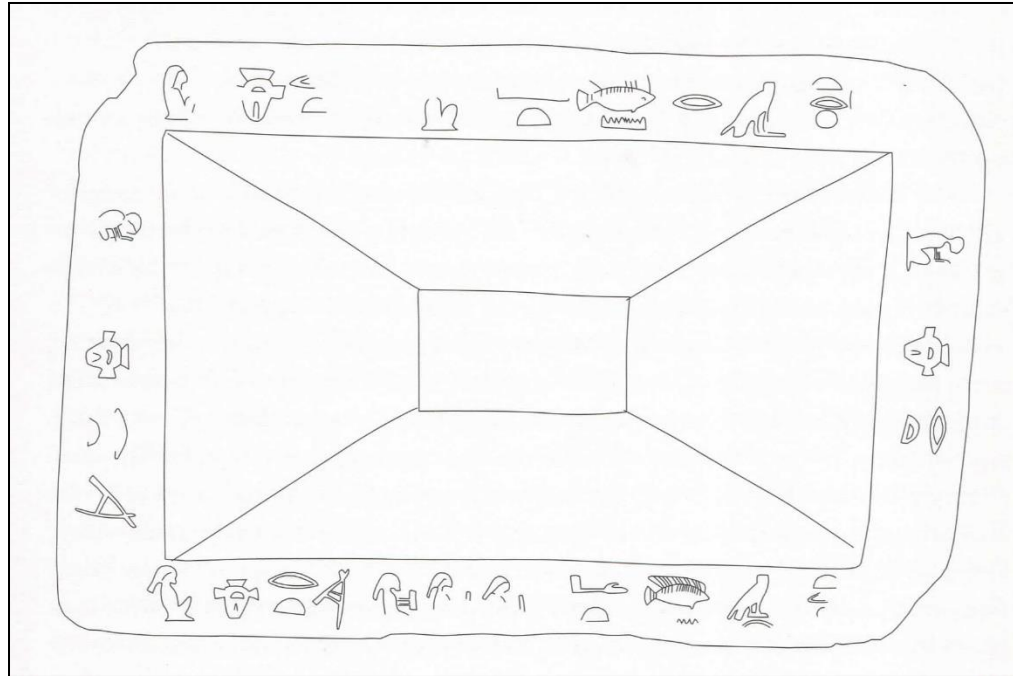


Figure 218 – Libation basin of an “overseer of *in^c.wt.*” Image from Fischer, *Women in the Old Kingdom*, fig. 25.

While references to midwives did not occur in the medical-magical texts, the available evidence discussed above suggests that both midwives and priestly magicians were involved in the birth process. While some Old Kingdom women held the title of “midwife,” the Middle Kingdom saw a shift to more the more generic “nurse” or “wet-nurse” titles. It is possible that a specialist, such as the lector-priest¹⁸³⁵ mentioned in Berlin 3027 spell F, would treat a woman from an elite household.¹⁸³⁶ Such aid, however, did not appear limited to elites, with evidence suggesting some usage of Egyptian magic by wider segments of the population.

5.2.4 Conditions and their treatments

This section divides the conditions discussed in the medical-magical texts into four general categories based on period in the pregnancy and birth process: fertility and pregnancy

¹⁸³⁵ For more on the role of lector-priests, see J.S. Thompson Jr., “The Iconography of the Memphite Priesthood in Egypt’s Elite Tombs of the Old Kingdom,” (PhD. Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2014), 33-71.

¹⁸³⁶ See below in § 5.2.4.3.

tests and treatments, conditions during pregnancy, birth, and post-birth survival. While some texts, such as Papyrus Leiden I 348, focused on one stage, others, such as the Ebers Papyrus and Berlin Papyrus 3027, had spells which discussed these different phases. Throughout the various stages of procreation, these spells linked the mother to Isis and Hathor as divine models of successful birth and the child to Horus for his ability to survive multiple crises as a child.

5.2.4.1 Fertility/ pregnancy tests and prescriptions

Scholars had noted the remarkable similarity between the fertility/ pregnancy tests from Papyrus Kahun spells 26-32, Papyrus Berlin 3038 spells 193-198, and Papyrus Carlsberg VIII spells 2-7,¹⁸³⁷ clearly demonstrating that these texts were copied. With many of these spells, it is unclear if they tested for a woman's fertility or for pregnancy. Since certain spells are damaged, the analysis below uses the best-preserved examples of parallel spells. In all the texts, the tests were based either on Egyptian concepts of the connections in the female body or on observations on the appearance of the patient.

Under the former, tests used pungent food, vomiting of prescriptions, fumigation, and the growth of grains and worms to determine pregnancy. Like a number of gynecological treatments in these papyri, a number of the fertility spells operated under the notion that the uterus is open to the interior of the body, and that something can come from the mouth to the female genitals and vice versa.¹⁸³⁸ Accordingly, Egyptians believed that, at least in the lay world, it is possible to

¹⁸³⁷ H. Kamal, *Dictionary of pharaonic medicine* (Cairo: The National Public House, 1967), 500.

¹⁸³⁸ For example, P. Diepgen, *Die Frauenheilkunde der Alten Welt* (München: Verlag von J. F. Bergmann, 1937), 44-5; Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*, 193; Ritner, "A uterine amulet," 210; Vymazalová and Strouhal, "Mother and child care," 159.

have a pregnancy from the mouth.¹⁸³⁹ For these spells, Egyptians particularly used onions, the *bddw-k3* plant, dates, emmer, and barley.¹⁸⁴⁰

Spells employing onions to assess pregnancy occurred in Papyrus Kahun and Papyrus Carlsberg VIII, with the former involving eating them and the latter with placing a bulb in the vagina. The latter was clearer on the function of the onion:

Carlsberg VIII, spell 4 (1, x+4 – x+6): [...] compared to [one who] will not [give birth]. Then you should cause that a bulb of an onion be situated at night, immersed (?) [...] her genitals (*iwf*) until dawn (*hḏ.t3*). If the odor comes from her mouth, so she will give birth. If [...], she never.¹⁸⁴¹

These onion tests appeared to have assessed whether the smell of the onion traveled from one opening in the woman's body to another. Since the onion did not seem to have had particular religious or medical connotation,¹⁸⁴² its pungent smell likely explains its use as a diagnostic prescription.

Spells that decided that a woman was pregnant if she vomited occurred in Kahun 27, Carlsberg VIII spell 7, and Berlin 3038 spells 193-194. While the Kahun and Carlsberg VIII spells involved prescriptions of dates mixed with alcoholic substances like wine and sweet beer, the latter relied on the *bddw-k3* plant mixed with the milk of a mother who gave birth to a boy. In all these cases, these spells seemed to have operated under the assumption that the pregnant/fertile woman would eject material that would be potentially harmful for the fetus. The Kahun spell was especially notable for having the number of vomits correlate to the number of children the woman would have. Practitioners applied these prescriptions via pouring in the vagina or having the patient sit on the material, as in Berlin spell 194 and Kahun spell 27 respectively or

¹⁸³⁹ H. Grapow, *Über die anatomischen Kenntnisse der altägyptischen Ärzte* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1935), 23.

¹⁸⁴⁰ R. Germer, "Untersuchungen über Arzneipflanzen im Alten Ägypten" (PhD. diss., Universität Hamburg, 1979), 379.

¹⁸⁴¹ *Grundriß* IV.1, 273.

¹⁸⁴² Germer, "Untersuchungen," 130.

instructing the woman to drink it. A similar concept seemed to have occurred also in Kahun spell 30, a very unclear spell which involved an incantation to Horus and something coming out of the nose or vagina meaning the woman was fertile/pregnant.

Kahun, spell 27 (3, 15-17): **Another instance.** You should have her sit on earth smeared with dregs of sweet beer, put fruit, [dates ...] [...] ejects, she will give birth and for every ejection which comes from her mouth, each is one birth (?) [...] [if she] does not [eject] though, she will never give birth.¹⁸⁴³

Kahun, spell 30 (3, 20-23): **Another instance.** That calf of Horus [...] I am on [...] Horus and vice versa. Go down to the place from which you [...] [...] **formula is said [...] if (it) comes down from her nostril, she will give birth. If (it) comes down from her vagina, she will give birth. If then [...] she will [not give birth] forever.**¹⁸⁴⁴

Carlsberg VIII, spell 7 (2, 3-6): "Another to distinguish between a woman who shall give birth and one who shall not. You shall let her drink [...], fresh dates and [...] [...] dates, *srn.t*, wine [...]. If she vomits with her mouth at once, then she will give birth. If she gets borborygmus, she will not give birth."¹⁸⁴⁵

Dates, its parts, and its processing products occurred in numerous prescriptions in Ebers, Berlin 3038, Kahun, Ramesseum V, Leiden, Carlsberg, and once in Berlin 3027.¹⁸⁴⁶ Dates themselves did not function as the active ingredient in medical treatments, but served rather as an easily available, cheap ground substance for prescriptions.¹⁸⁴⁷ It occurred frequently in association with fertility spells, with at least five known instances. One possible reason for this correlation may be the observed sexuality of this tree, which had both female and male parts.¹⁸⁴⁸

¹⁸⁴³ M. Collier and S. Quirke, *UCL Kahun Papyri: religious, literary, legal, mathematical, and medical* (BAR international series 1209. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2004), 63.

¹⁸⁴⁴ Collier and Quirke, *UCL Kahun Papyri*, 64.

¹⁸⁴⁵ Iversen, *Papyrus Carlsberg No. VIII*, 27.

¹⁸⁴⁶ For full list, see Germer, "Untersuchungen," 154; *ibid.*, *Handbucher altägyptischen Heilpflanzen*, 59-64.

¹⁸⁴⁷ Germer, "Untersuchungen," 164.

¹⁸⁴⁸ Germer, "Untersuchungen," 165-6.

The *bddw-k3* plant, paired with milk of a mother who gave birth to a boy, occurred in fertility spells Berlin 193 and 194, likely due to religious associations.¹⁸⁴⁹

Berlin 3038, spell 193 (Rs. 1, 3-4): [The detection] (Note 1) of a woman, who will give birth, compared to a woman, who will [not] give birth. *Bddw-k3* plant; would be ground, would be incorporated in milk of one who has given birth to a boy; would be made to a drinking agent, would be drunk by the woman. If she vomits, so she gives birth. If she gets bloating, so she never gives birth.¹⁸⁵⁰

Berlin 3038, spell 194 (Rs. 1, 5-6): What <yet> is said about it as another remedy. *Bddw-k3* plant; is incorporated in milk of one who has given birth to a boy; is poured into her vulva. If she vomits, so she gives birth. If she gets bloating, so it means that she will not give birth.¹⁸⁵¹

In spell 195 of Berlin 3038 and spell 5 of Carlsberg VIII,¹⁸⁵² practitioners diagnosed a woman's condition, based on the results of a fumigation. The material for the fumigation is unclear in Carlsberg, but since the spells appear similar, it was likely the same as in Berlin:¹⁸⁵³

Berlin 3038, spell 195 (Rs. 1, 7-8): **Another determination (*m33*) of a woman who will not give birth.** [...]. Then one should fumigate her (the woman) with feces of hippopotamus. If she excretes (*wšš* ?) urine (*hr*) or bloating at the same time, so she will give birth. If it is not the case (?), so she will not give birth, because she has stood <against> (?) anything.

The desired result of the fumigation varied, with excreting urine or bloating in the Berlin spell and vomiting in the Carlsberg spell. Given the similarity of the latter to the vomiting spells discussed above, where the substances ejected were considered threats to a potential pregnancy, the hippo dung of Berlin 3038 more likely referred to Seth, as opposed to Taweret. Sending out malignant forces through bodily wastes also occurred in other medical-magical spells,¹⁸⁵⁴ such as Ebers 131 commanding the illness substance *whdw* "Be spat out! Be vomited out! Perish just as

¹⁸⁴⁹ For more on the symbolism of the *bddw-k3*, see below, § 5.2.5.1.

¹⁸⁵⁰ *Grundriß* IV.1, 273.

¹⁸⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵² 1, x+6 – 2,1. See Iversen, *Papyrus Carlsberg No. VIII*, 23.

¹⁸⁵³ Iversen, *Papyrus Carlsberg No. VIII*, 23.

¹⁸⁵⁴ Ritner, *Mechanics*, 82.

you come into being!"¹⁸⁵⁵ Post-birth protection spell Berlin 3027 spell D (2,7-10)¹⁸⁵⁶ likewise commanded the enemy force to come out of the patient through bodily excretions, in this case spittle and urine.

Another method Egyptians used to measure a woman's fertility/pregnancy was to test for the growth of worms and plants using her bodily waste. Carlsberg VIII spell 2 investigated the former.¹⁸⁵⁷

[...] in a *ḥnd.t*- sack of material [...] sand of the shore corresponding to [...] on it each day, while it being filled [...] dates.
If it develops (*kmz*) worms [...] she will not give birth.
[If it does not develop (*kmz*)] worms, so what she will give birth will live.
If [...].

From the remaining text, it is unclear whether the practitioner used a woman's urine or feces,¹⁸⁵⁸ but the test demonstrated that Egyptians viewed worm growth as a sign of infertility. This negative association may be due to the worm's link to various diseases, since a number of diseases used the worm determinative in medical-magical papyri.¹⁸⁵⁹

In contrast, the spells using barley and emmer used growth as a sign of fertility/pregnancy. Unfortunately, the spells provide no information on the timing needed to perform them, such as how long she needed to wait and whether the tests could only happen during certain seasons. Of the two parallel spells using barley and emmer to test fertility,

¹⁸⁵⁵ Wreszinski, *Der Papyrus Ebers*, 30,16.

¹⁸⁵⁶ See below in § 5.2.4.4.

¹⁸⁵⁷ Iversen, *Papyrus Carlsberg No. VIII*, 10-11.

¹⁸⁵⁸ Iversen, *Papyrus Carlsberg No. VIII*, 10 had stated that, based on the subsequent spell, the spell likely tested urine.

¹⁸⁵⁹ For example, Ebers 64, 72, and possibly 875. For more information on the link of worms to diseases in Egyptian texts, see Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*, 68-72.

Carlsberg VIII spell 3 is much more heavily damaged, with Berlin 3038 spell 199 the basis for reconstructing the former:¹⁸⁶⁰

Another determination (*m33*) that a woman gives birth <and> that she does not give birth.

Barley <and> emmer, the woman moistens <them> with her urine every day as dates and sand in two bags.

If she grows all <both>, so she will give birth.

If the barley grows, it means a male child.

If the emmer grows, it means a female child.

If they do not grow, so she does not give birth.¹⁸⁶¹

Practitioners likely based this test on the association of grain with life.¹⁸⁶² Clearly, Egyptians perceived that the urine of a pregnant woman was a determinant for the gender of her fetus. Previous research focused on whether this test can predict pregnancy and gender,¹⁸⁶³ but it is more useful to see the role of the grains as symbolic, with the word for emmer *it*, being masculine, and barley (*bd.t*) being feminine.¹⁸⁶⁴

Observation-based diagnoses focused on appearance of the breasts, face, and eyes, as well as a woman's pulse. However, as will be seen below, these tests also could have had possible religious connotations. Certain scholars had considered these pregnancy tests in light of modern knowledge, defining some, such as taking a woman's pulse, the color of the skin and eyes, and vomiting, as "sound," while others like the wheat and barley test described above, as

¹⁸⁶⁰ Iversen, *Papyrus Carlsberg No. VIII*, 14.

¹⁸⁶¹ *Grundriss IV*. 1, 274.

¹⁸⁶² Watterson, *Women in ancient Egypt*, 87. For example, see M. Centrone, "Corn-mummies, amulets of Life," in *Through a glass darkly: magic, dreams and prophecy in ancient Egypt*, ed. K. Szpakowska (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2008), 33-46.

¹⁸⁶³ P. Ghalioungui, S. Khalil, A.R. Ammar, "On an ancient Egyptian method of diagnosing pregnancy and determining fetal sex," *Medical History* 7 (1963), 241ff; N.428: Germer, "Untersuchungen," 143ff.

¹⁸⁶⁴ Feucht, "Das Weg in der Leben," 37; *Grundriß III*, 67.

“more irrational.”¹⁸⁶⁵ The discussion above¹⁸⁶⁶ indicates that this framework is improper for understanding the texts.

Part of assessing pregnancy/fertility included testing the breasts, as in Papyrus Kahun 26 and Papyrus Berlin 3038 spell 196:

Kahun, spell 26 (3, 12-14): **Determining a woman who will conceive from one who will not.** You should [make] fresh oil and [...] You should [...] it. If the vessels of her innards are found distended, you should say of it 'it is the birth'; if you find it limp, you should say of it 'she should give birth late,' but if you find her like ...[...]¹⁸⁶⁷

Berlin 3038, spell 196 (Rs. 1,9-11): **An[other] determination** (*m33*). She should lie down. You should anoint (*gs*) her breast, both her underarms, both [her] upper arms with new oil. You may get up early to look (*m33*) at her; if you find her vessels nice and fresh, without being sunk: [this means] a lucky (*hnp*) birth; if you find it (the vessels) sunken as skin ... her body: this means a difficult birth (*bnd*); if you find her while it (the vessels) are fresh, <only> at night when she looks (*m33*), so she will give birth hesitantly (*wdf*).¹⁸⁶⁸

Here, as in Kahun spell 26 (3, 13), the veins did not disappear nor sink, meaning the breasts were full and healthy.¹⁸⁶⁹ The skin of a pregnant woman often has known spots, darker pigmented areas, and engorged mammary veins.¹⁸⁷⁰ This concept also occurred in Kahun spell 31, which used the appearance of the face to make a diagnosis:

Another instance. If you see her face fresh with freshness but find something on her like [...] [...] but if you see anything on her eyes, she will never give birth.¹⁸⁷¹

¹⁸⁶⁵ Janssen and Janssen, *Growing up in ancient Egypt*, 2; H. Fischer-Elfert, "Heilkunde im Alten Ägypten," In *Zwischen Magie und Wissenschaft: Ärzte und Heilkunst in den Papyri aus Ägypten*, ed. Harald Froschauer and Cornelia Römer (Wien: Phoibos Verlag, 2007), pp. 43-54.

¹⁸⁶⁶ See § 5.2.1.

¹⁸⁶⁷ Collier and Quirke, *UCL Lahun Papyri*, 63.

¹⁸⁶⁸ *Grundriß der Medizin*, IV.1, 274-5.

¹⁸⁶⁹ Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 260.

¹⁸⁷⁰ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, 126; Feucht, *Das Kind*, 99.

¹⁸⁷¹ Collier and Quirke, *UCL Lahun Papyri*, 64.

Papyrus Kahun spell 29, spell 32, and Papyrus Berlin 3038 spell 197 referenced testing the *mnjz* body part,¹⁸⁷² with the first and third the most complete:

Kahun spell 29 (3,19-20): **Another instance.** You should pummel for it on her lip, the tip of your finger on the top of her *mnjz* [If ..] hurts [...] I[f ..] does not hurt, she will never give birth.

Berlin 3038, spell 197 (Rs. 1,11-13): **Another determination** (*mz*). You should hold her finger with your hand, then you must bend her underarm, then you must go over her body (*d.t*), while you had grabbed her *mnjz*-body part with your fingers and your ...-body part ... by means of her forearm. If the vessel on the inner side of her forearm offers resistance (*njz*) to your hand, then you should say: she will be pregnant.

Two spells, one from Papyrus Berlin 3038 and the other from Papyrus Carlsberg VIII, contained a fertility test based on the color of a woman's eyes:

Berlin 3038, spell 198 (Rs. 2, 1-2): **Another determination** (*mz*). You should cause that she be raised on the soffit of the door. If you find the appearance of <both> her eyes, the one as an Asiatic, the other as a Nubian, so she will not give birth. If you find it in one skin<-color>, so she will give birth.¹⁸⁷³

Papyrus Carlsberg VIII, spell 6 (2, 1-3): **Another to distinguish between a woman who shall give birth and one who shall not.** You shall let the woman stand in her doorway (...) You shall examine her eyes. If you see one of these as an Asiatic, the other as a Nubian, then she will not give birth. If you see them of one color, then she will give birth.¹⁸⁷⁴

As will be explained below,¹⁸⁷⁵ Asiatics and Nubians appeared in other spells associated with women and children as threats. The spells seem to have used the doorway as a liminal space that can be vulnerable to chaotic or malignant forces, which would be similar to the use of

¹⁸⁷² See § 5.2.5.2 below for definition of the term.

¹⁸⁷³ *Grundriß*, IV.1, 275.

¹⁸⁷⁴ Iversen, *Papyrus Carlsberg No. VIII*, 25.

¹⁸⁷⁵ See § 5.2.5.

smiting scenes of temple walls to protect the building from chaos. This concept would likewise explain the beings on apotropaia and birth bricks.¹⁸⁷⁶

While Egyptians understood that the threat of infertility affects both men and women,¹⁸⁷⁷ there is no record of male fertility tests. Papyrus Kahun spell 20, which is only partially preserved and treated an unclear problem, was a treatment for a woman “stricken by a prescription for pregnancy after severing the return (?)” (*ir hwt m phrt nt siwi hr-sz fdḳ nnt p...*).¹⁸⁷⁸ Carlsberg VIII has the only spell aimed at achieving conception,¹⁸⁷⁹ but it unfortunately is not preserved enough to gain any useful information:

Papyrus Carlsberg VIII, Spell 1 (1, 1-3): **[If you investigate a woman...].** [...] she cannot begin to be pregnant [as a result of] anything. It is her [...] all of a sudden. **Then you should make her:** [...] pregnant. If not (*in iw tm*) [...].¹⁸⁸⁰

5.2.4.2 Conditions during pregnancy

Spells pertaining to pregnancy primarily addressed miscarriage. While Papyrus BM 10059¹⁸⁸¹ of the New Kingdom and Papyrus Kahun spell 20 of the Middle Kingdom discussed this issue, a spell for "determining the child to be born in the uterus of the woman,"¹⁸⁸² presumably about learning the gender of the fetus, is unfortunately too little preserved to give more information. Feucht had assumed that a spell from Papyrus Smith has a spell that dealt with a woman who had stomach pain and did not have menstruation,¹⁸⁸³ and she understood that the

¹⁸⁷⁶ See below, §§ 6.3.3.2 and 7.2.1-2.

¹⁸⁷⁷ Feucht, *Das Kind*, 93, N.402; E. Feucht, “Gattenwahl, Ehe und Nachkommenschaft im alten Ägypten,” in *Geschlechtsreife und Legitimation zur Zeugung*, Vol. 1, ed. E. W. Müller (München: Alber, 1985), 78 Anm. 116.

¹⁸⁷⁸ F Ll. Griffith, *Hieratic papyri from Kahun and Gurob* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1898), plate VI; Collier and Quirke, *UCL Kahun Papyri*, 62.

¹⁸⁷⁹ Spell 1; 1,1 -1,3.

¹⁸⁸⁰ Westendorf, *Handbuch für altägyptischen Medizin*, 418.

¹⁸⁸¹ Spells 26-30, 30. While Ebers 828-830 discuss bleeding, the vague heading of no. 828 does not suggest that the bleeding related to miscarriage, so I have excluded them from the corpus.

¹⁸⁸² Kahun spell 19. For hieroglyphic transcription, see Griffith, *Hieratic papyri from Kahun and Gurob*, pl. IV. For translation, see Collier and Quirke, *UCL Kahun Papyri*, 61; *Grundriß* IV.1, 276.

¹⁸⁸³ pSmith 20,13-21,3.

symptoms indicated early pregnancy.¹⁸⁸⁴ However, the sentence, "This is a blockage of blood in her uterus," seems too vague to distinguish the source of this obstruction.

The basis for the London papyrus spells was an understanding that menstrual blood flowed in the body, and that its reversal would lead to miscarriage.¹⁸⁸⁵ Cloth placed in the vagina as tampons seems to have been a rather common method of preventing miscarriage,¹⁸⁸⁶ with spells 25, 27-30, and 33 using mechanical and magical sealing of the vagina.¹⁸⁸⁷ While some of these spells specified a bandage of a particular fabric,¹⁸⁸⁸ others invoked the tampon as a dam¹⁸⁸⁹ or gateway.¹⁸⁹⁰ Two of the miscarriage spells invoked or hinted to Seth as a threat to the fetus,¹⁸⁹¹ while a third was directed against a companion of Seth.¹⁸⁹² Such use of tampons was also common among Mesopotamian anti-miscarriage spells.¹⁸⁹³ In London spells 25, 27, 29, and 30, two used the inundation as a metaphor for menstruation,¹⁸⁹⁴ and number 28 explicitly stated the end result of the stoppage of the blood: "It means the making firm of the egg (*srwd swḥ.t pw*)."¹⁸⁹⁵

The first spell from the series invoked Thoth as well as specifying the use of a carnelian bead as an amulet:



¹⁸⁸⁴ Feucht, *Das Kind*, 98.



¹⁸⁸⁵ Leitz, *Magical and medical papyri*, 67, note 146.

¹⁸⁸⁶ Feucht, "Das Weg in der Leben," 44; Meskell, *Private life*, 68; Strouhal, *Life of the Ancient Egyptians*, 15.

¹⁸⁸⁷ Leitz, *Magical and medical papyri*, 67.

¹⁸⁸⁸ Spells 27, 29, 30.

¹⁸⁸⁹ Spell 25, *dni.t*  .

¹⁸⁹⁰ Spell 28, *rrw.t*  .

¹⁸⁹¹ Spells 26 and 28.

¹⁸⁹² Spell 25.

¹⁸⁹³ J. A. Scurlock, "Baby-snatching demons, restless souls and the dangers of childbirth: medico-magical means of dealing with some of the perils of motherhood in ancient Mesopotamia," *Incognita* 2 (1991): 136, n. 15.

¹⁸⁹⁴ Wreszinski, *London*, 154-158 and 196-202, cols. 13/1-14/5; Leitz, *Magical and medical papyri*, 72, note 192; Ritner, "A uterine amulet," 212.

¹⁸⁹⁵ Ritner, "A uterine amulet," 212-213; Wreszinski, *London*, 156 and 199, col. 13/13 (no. 40, line 13).

BM 10059, Spell 25 (= Wreszinski spell 37; IX, 1-3): **Incantation for repelling blood:** Back, companion of Horus! Back, companion of Seth! Repelled is the blood that comes from Hermopolis. Repelled is the red blood that comes forth at the hour. You are ignorant of the dam.¹⁸⁹⁶ Back before (?) Thoth! **This incantation is to be recited over a bead of carnelian, placed in the backside (*phwy*) <of the man>. or the woman. That signifies repelling the blood.**¹⁸⁹⁷

Thoth, whose cult center was Hermopolis, was noted for his connection to menstruation as the moon-god.¹⁸⁹⁸ For example, in Ebers 795,¹⁸⁹⁹ a fumigation spell for the uterus specified using an "ibis of wax." As briefly noted above,¹⁹⁰⁰ Egyptian religious practices often invoked red to indicate blood. The use of a red carnelian bead would thus have been appropriate for a spell to stem bleeding. It is perhaps this association of red with blood that explained its presence on a number of New Kingdom female figurines, *tjt*-knots, and garnets inside Middle Kingdom cylinder amulets.

Three spells in the papyrus invoked deities Anubis and Tait and used a certain type of linen:

BM 10059, spell 27 (Wreszinski Incantation 39; IX, 7-9): I am that Anubis, who dams a dam. [I] am Anubis, through me is Isis released, my arms [...] my bandages. Turn back! Isis comes forth, to shoot with (?) you. **This incantation is to be spoken over a bandage [of] fine linen. This incantation is to be written on it in its entirety, and given to the woman <at> her abdomen.**¹⁹⁰¹

BM 10059, spell 29 (= Wreszinski Incantation 41; IX, 14-X,1): **Another incantation to repel bleeding:** Anubis comes forth, to drive back the Nile flood from treading the sanctuary of Tait. What is in it is protected. **This incantation is to be spoken over linen of *r3-ḫ33t*-weave, made into an amuletic knot and placed into the inside of her vulva.**¹⁹⁰²

¹⁸⁹⁶ Leitz, note 150: The dam refers to the tampon, preventing bleeding; the choice of the word *dnit*, which had probably lost its *n*, might evoke the girdle of Isis (the menstrual bandage) *tjt*.

¹⁸⁹⁷ Leitz, *Magical and medical papyri of the New Kingdom*, 67.

¹⁸⁹⁸ Leitz, "Die Rolle von Religion," 59-60; W. Westendorf, "Beiträge aus und zu medizinischen Texten," ZÄS 92 (1966): 153. For further information, see C. Leitz, *Tagewählerei* (ÄA 55; Wiesbaden, 1994), 200, n.19.

¹⁸⁹⁹ See § 5.2.5.2, under *mw.t rmt*.


¹⁹⁰⁰ See above in § 5.2.1, and also §§ 4.4-4.5.

¹⁹⁰¹ Leitz, *Magical and medical papyri of the New Kingdom*, 68.

¹⁹⁰² Leitz, *Magical and medical texts in the New Kingdom*, 69.

BM 10059, spell 30 (= Wreszinski Incantation 42; X, 1-2): **To repel (evil) activity (?) of a dead person or of a god [by] the magic power of Anubis.** The Nile flood encroaches on the sandal of Tait. There will be left (intact?) what lies within. **Words to be spoken, when you placed two knots of linen of *r3-ỉ33t*-weave at the opening of the inside of her vulva, to drive away the deeds against her.**¹⁹⁰³

While the goal in spell 29 was to prevent any bleeding, with the womb stated to be sealed, spell 30 clearly indicated that miscarriage had begun. While Ritner had stated that the latter, as well as spell 33,¹⁹⁰⁴ required the discharge of present fluids before closure can begin, nothing from the text itself seems to suggest this requirement. He also had considered Ebers spells 828-830, which were for "drawing off (literally "dragging") blood from a woman," as related miscarriage spells.¹⁹⁰⁵ However, as noted above, nothing from the heading of Ebers 828 specified the type of bleeding discussed.

It is unclear whether the textile from *r3-ỉ33t* () was a specific weave¹⁹⁰⁶ or a strip of linen with a specific use.¹⁹⁰⁷ As we will discuss below,¹⁹⁰⁸ the knot amulets from these spells as well as number 30 also occurred with some frequency in the post-birth protection spells, and seemed to have signified general protection by blocking malevolent forces. In analogy to daily-life, Egyptians used stopper knots to prevent a string from unravelling, with a knotted end.¹⁹⁰⁹ Only Papyrus London Spell 30 specified the use of two knots. Given the prominence in the texts for the provision of protection during the day and during the night¹⁹¹⁰ and the number

¹⁹⁰³ Leitz, *Magical and medical texts in the New Kingdom*, 69.

¹⁹⁰⁴ Ritner, "A uterine amulet," 213.

¹⁹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰⁶ *Wb* II, 393, 1.


¹⁹⁰⁷ Wendrich, "Entangled," 249-250.

¹⁹⁰⁸ See § 5.2.4.4.

¹⁹⁰⁹ Wendrich, "Entangled," 249.

¹⁹¹⁰ See Berlin 3027, Spells Q-T below.

two's association with duality,¹⁹¹¹ the two-knots amulets likely highlighted this aspect of safety during both parts of the day.

Tait was a goddess of weaving, and Egyptian magic used the knot for bounding positive forces and blocking out malevolent ones.¹⁹¹² The involvement of Anubis and Tait was likely related to the fact that these knots were knotted in textile bandages, which were associated with wrappings, rather than thread, hair or string.¹⁹¹³ Texts also sometimes identified Tait with Isis and Hathor.¹⁹¹⁴ Given this association, some scholars have theorized a connection of this knot-tampon to the *tjt*-knot amulets of the New Kingdom.¹⁹¹⁵ It seems likely that the spells referred to a tampon-like object of such material to stave off bleeding.¹⁹¹⁶ Westendorf had linked the *wꜥbt* () "sanctuary" of spell 29 to the concept of bleeding as a form of purification.¹⁹¹⁷ Such a tampon or weaved material for protection appears to be referenced in *CT* 148:

"Here this, O gods," said Isis, "which Atum-Rē', lord of The Mansion-of-Images, has declared! He has commanded for me within my womb the protection of my son, having knit together an entourage within this womb of mine, since he knew that he was heir of Osiris. Protection has been granted the Falcon within this womb of mine by Atum-Rē', lord of the gods."¹⁹¹⁸

In regard to threats to pregnancies, BM 10059 spells 26 and 28 referenced Seth:

¹⁹¹¹ See Wilkinson, *Symbol and magic*, 129-131.

¹⁹¹² Meskell, *Private life in New Kingdom Egypt*, 68.

¹⁹¹³ Pinch, *Magic in ancient Egypt*, 84; Wendrich, "Entangled," 250.

¹⁹¹⁴ J. Janák, *Brána nebes: bohové a démoni starého Egypta* (Praha: Nakl. Libri, 2005), 172-173; Leitz, *Lexikon VII*, 359-362; Wilkinson, *Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 168.

¹⁹¹⁵ See above, § 4.5.

¹⁹¹⁶ Leitz, *Magical and medical papyri of the New Kingdom*, 68, note 175.

¹⁹¹⁷ Westendorf, "Beiträge," 148.

¹⁹¹⁸ Lines 218b-291b. R.H. O'Connell, "The emergence of Horus: an analysis of Coffin Texts Spell 148," *JEA* 69 (1983): 74; R.O. Faulkner, *The ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts I* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1973), 125-126; Gilula, "Coffin Texts Spell 148," 14-19.

BM 10059, spell 26 (= Wreszinski Incantation 38; IX, 3-7):¹⁹¹⁹ This venomous seed¹⁹²⁰ is that of *'Imy-nhd.f*,¹⁹²¹ whom Mafdet has taken in that chamber, in which Isis rejoiced and in which the two testicles of Seth were severed. Do not hold back! Come out, venomous seed of Horus and *'Imy-nhd[f]*, come out to a dead male or female, etc. The name of the enemy, the name of his father, the name of his mother. O Mafdet, open your mouth wide against that enemy, [a dead male] or a female etc... Do not allow him to see <even one> opportunity. **Words to be spoken over an erect phallus of a donkey of *dpt*-cake, inscribed with the name of his enemy [...] name of his father, name of his mother. To be placed inside the fat of some meat and given to a female cat.**

BM 10059, spell 28 (= Wreszinski Incantation 40; IX, 9-14):¹⁹²² Back, O [male intruder (?)]. Back, male intruder! Back, female intruder! Back! The gods [at the] head of Heliopolis shoot and repel you. There does not fear [...]. I bring you a fine thread of fabric, the hair of a black fiber,¹⁹²³ the hair of a ...?¹⁹²⁴ donkey, the liver of a turtle. You say "Away!", so I say to you "away." This gateway is in order. Do not come out of it!

This incantation is to be spoken over a fine thread of a fabric, the hair of a black fiber, the hair of a ...?¹⁹²⁵ donkey. To be twisted leftwards, and made into four amulet knots. To be anointed with the liver of a pig. To be wrapped, and given to a woman at her abdomen, to repel any bleeding and any infection. This means allowing the egg to grow strong and not seeing dreams.¹⁹²⁶ This incantation is to be spoken for each individual knot.

¹⁹¹⁹ Leitz, *Magical and medical papyri of the New Kingdom*, 68.

¹⁹²⁰ P. Eschweiler, *Bildzauber in alten Ägypten* (OBO 137, Freiburg (Schweiz), 1994), 29, also unaware of the contributions by Westendorf, still translated as 'hemorrhage' (from B. Ebbell, "Die ägyptischen Krankheitsnamen," ZÄS 62 (1927): 16-18) already rejected in *Grundriß* VII, 132-3, cf. also Borghouts, *P Leiden I 348*, 99, n.173 and R. Ritner, "O. Gardiner 363: a spell against night terrors," *JARCE* 27 (1990): 33, n. 28.

¹⁹²¹ Leitz, *Lexikon* I, 239: "He who is in his weakness." Westendorf, "Beiträge," 129 had considered him as Osiris; another possibility might be Seth, cf. *CT* V, 244 a-b, where *'Imy-nhd.f* appears to be an epithet of Apopis.

¹⁹²² Leitz, *Magical and medical texts of the New Kingdom*, 69.

¹⁹²³ Leitz, *Magical and medical texts*, note 167: Cf. for *mnw* "fabric" *Grundriß* VI, 241 with reference to *P Bremner-Rhind* 26, 3. Two other sources in a magical context are J.-C. Goyon, "Textes mythologiques, I: 'Le livre de protéger la barque du dieu,'" *Kemi* 19 (1969): 186 and S. Schott, "Totenbuchspruch 175 in einem Ritual zur Vernichtung von Feinden," *MDAIK* 14 (1956): 185, n.8 (cf. also p. 196).

¹⁹²⁴ Leitz, *Magical and medical texts*, note 168: For *kmꜣw* (designation of color or age) cf. *Grundriß* VII, 885.

¹⁹²⁵ For this expression L. Kákósy, *Studia Aegyptiaca* VII, Budapest 1981, 245, n. hh (originally published in *Acta Antiqua Academica Scientiarum Hungarica* 19, 1971, 159ff.).

¹⁹²⁶ Referring of course to the bad dreams; see Borghouts in his commentary on *P Leiden I 348*, 32-3 with extensive bibliography.

Egyptian texts attributed the direct cause of such miscarriages to the nightly assault of incubi and especially their leader, Seth.¹⁹²⁷ For example, part of *CT* 148 discussed this danger in detail.¹⁹²⁸

Then Atum said, "As you are pregnant, then that which you conceal, o mistress, is that your pregnancy is [to result in] your giving birth to godhead which was [formerly] the seed of Osiris, lest he might break the seed within its infancy, [the one] whom even the Great-of-Magic fears."¹⁹²⁹

Relatedly, *CT* 464 even described Seth as angry against the wind for keeping Horus alive.¹⁹³⁰ Conversely, images, artifacts, and threats related to Seth could be used to coerce the womb.¹⁹³¹ The milk of an ass occurred as a remedy, and its hair, urine, liver, and other body parts appeared in uterine prescriptions.¹⁹³² The black fabric in spell 29 of BM 10059 served to capture Seth,¹⁹³³ who was described as a black boar in *CT* 157 (or Book of the Dead 112).¹⁹³⁴ Pigs were particularly associated with Seth,¹⁹³⁵ as well as the donkey.¹⁹³⁶ The turtle, as a creature living in water, was considered a chaotic and dangerous creature,¹⁹³⁷ though, as will be explained below,¹⁹³⁸ it also occurred as an apotropaic figure on the birth knives, feeding cups, and steatite rods of the Middle Kingdom. The references to Mafdet in spell 26 of BM 10059, such as the cat

¹⁹²⁷ Ritner, "A uterine amulet," 215; H. te Velde, *Seth, God of Confusion: A study of his role in Egyptian mythology and religion* (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 28-29; Westendorf, "Beiträge," 145-51.

¹⁹²⁸ Faulkner, *Coffin Texts*, 217c-218a; Gilula, "Coffin Texts Spell 148," 14-19.

¹⁹²⁹ O'Connell, "The emergence of Horus," 73-74; Faulkner, *Coffin Texts* I, 125-126; Gilula, "Coffin Texts Spell 148," 14.

¹⁹³⁰ Faulkner, *The ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts* II (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1975), ll. 337b-338a.

¹⁹³¹ Ritner, "A uterine amulet," 215.

¹⁹³² P. Kahun VI col. 1/5 (liver) and 1/18 (urine); P. Ebers, no. 819 (milk); P. B.M. 10059, no. 40, col. 13ll. 11-12 (hair); J.G. Griffith, "Seth or Anubis?," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 22 (1959): 367, n.7.

¹⁹³³ Leitz, *Magical and medical texts from the New Kingdom*, 69, note 167.

¹⁹³⁴ H. te Velde, "Some Egyptian gods and their piggishness," in *The intellectual heritage of Egypt: studies presented to László Kákossy by friends and colleagues on the occasion of his 60th birthday*, ed. U. Luft. *Studia Aegyptiaca* 14 (Budapest: chaire d'Égyptologie, 1992), 572, citing *CT* spell 157 and *BD* 112.

¹⁹³⁵ See te Velde, "Some Egyptian gods," 572-3, 575.

¹⁹³⁶ See W.A. Ward, "The *ḥiw*-ass, the *ḥiw*-serpent, and the god Seth," *JNES* 37.1 (1978): 23-34, especially 23-26.


¹⁹³⁷ H. Fischer, "Egyptian turtles," *BMA* 24 (1965-1966): 195-200.

¹⁹³⁸ See Chapter 6, especially § 6.2.10, as well as § 7.2.3.

who devours the cake shaped like a donkey phallus, invoked her protective powers in an act of ritual destruction.¹⁹³⁹ Waraska had theorized that a similar ritual destruction occurred with nude female figurines.¹⁹⁴⁰ In several spells from the Pyramid Texts,¹⁹⁴¹ the goddess protected the deceased king from snakes and scorpions. As we will discuss below,¹⁹⁴² Mafdet also occurred on Middle Kingdom birth knives.

Another invocation, which appears to be along the same vein as the other spells above, is spell 33:

BM 10059, spell 33 (= Wreszinski 45; X, 5-8): **Conjuration of the womb:** O this body, ...?... to her, may you stretch yourself out to the womb, go down to [your (?)] place! Make your horn high! Make your horns high like (that of) Sekhat-Hor as 'horn to horn, tip to tip.' The entrails of the abdomen and of the belly are like ..?...? since there existed what should exist by the descent of the flood into the inside, to seal the opening of the womb, as Lower Egypt was sealed behind the tribunal, as the entrance to a wadi is sealed. **You should place [...] on her left side.**¹⁹⁴³

According to A.A. Barb, a rare variant of uterine amulet represents an example of Ptolemaic continuation of prior Egyptian concepts.¹⁹⁴⁴ Derived from the anatomy of a cow, the hieroglyphic sign for uterus () displays two recurved "horns" for the ovaries, which this spell invoked.¹⁹⁴⁵ Sekhat-Hor, as a celestial cow who fed the king, can sometimes be identified with Isis and Hathor.¹⁹⁴⁶

¹⁹³⁹ See W. Westendorf, "Die Pantherkatze Mafdet," *ZDMG* 118.2 (1968): 248-256.

¹⁹⁴⁰ See above, § 3.2.9.

¹⁹⁴¹ R.O. Faulkner, *The ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), spells 438, 440-2, 1212.

¹⁹⁴² See § 6.2.4.

¹⁹⁴³ Leitz, *Magical and medical texts of the New Kingdom*, 71.

¹⁹⁴⁴ A.A. Barb, "Diva Matrix: A Fake Gnotstic Intaglio in the possession of P.P. Rubens and the iconography of the symbol," *Journal of the Warburg and Coutauld Institutes* 16.3-4 (1953): 195-196 and 216, n. 49; Ritner, "A uterine amulet," 212.

¹⁹⁴⁵ Wreszinski, *London*, 158 and 202-3 (no. 45, col. 14/6-7).

¹⁹⁴⁶ Janák, *Brána nebes*, 153. See also § 6.2.6.

As we will discuss below,¹⁹⁴⁷ *mw.t rmt* can mean either uterus or placenta depending on the context. Thus, it is uncertain whether spells 17-18 in Papyrus Kahun,¹⁹⁴⁸ which addressed a bleeding disorder, treated miscarriage or some other birth-related bleeding.¹⁹⁴⁹

As mentioned earlier, Kahun spell 20 discussed a woman who had previously received a prescription for conception.¹⁹⁵⁰

As for a woman stricken by a prescription for pregnancy after severing the return(?) [...] Grind, refine, soak (?) in cloth with *hsz* and *ʿwyt*-liquid. Submerge in the waters (?) [...] incense, fresh oil, dates, sweet beer. Place inside a rack (?) on the flame. You should fumigate [...] as a sweetener of the mouth.

Most translations don't discuss what the phrase, "severing the return," the condition the spell addresses, could possibly mean.¹⁹⁵¹ One likely possibility, given that the treatment discussed a woman who presumably had difficulty getting pregnant, would be miscarriage.¹⁹⁵²

5.2.4.3 Birth

The spells pertaining to birth discussed pain relief, the acceleration of birth, loosening the child, releasing the placenta, and protection on the day of birth. A number of these spells invoked Isis and Hathor as the mother, which is consistent with other spells pertaining to mothers and children.

¹⁹⁴⁷ See § 5.2.5.2.

¹⁹⁴⁸ Griffith, *Papyri from Kahun and Gurob*, 9, pl. 5-6. Collier and Quirke, *UCL Lahun papyri*, 61; *Grundriß* IV.1, 270.



¹⁹⁴⁹ J.M. Stevens, "Gynecology from ancient Egypt: the papyrus Kahun: a translation of the oldest treatise on gynecology that has survived from the ancient world." *Medical Journal of Australia* (1975/2): 951.

¹⁹⁵⁰ Griffith, *Papyri from Kahun and Gurob*, pl. 5-6; Collier and Quirke, *UCL Lahun papyri*, 61 translated the heading in Kahun 17 "human mother" and Griffith, *ibid.*, 9 translated "womb." However, *Grundriß* IV.1, 270 translates "placenta" and Stevens, "Gynecology from ancient Egypt," 951 had supposed the spell treated either menorrhagia or miscarriage.

¹⁹⁵¹ Griffith, *Papyri from Kahun and Gurob*, 9; *Grundriß* IV.1, 270; Collier and Quirke, *UCL Lahun Papyri*, 62.

¹⁹⁵² Strouhal and Vymazalová, *Medicine of the ancient Egyptians*, 156.

Two spells, one from Papyrus Berlin 3027 and the other from Papyrus Kahun addressed pain relief during a woman's labor:

Kahun, spell 33 (3, 25-26): **Preventing acute pains** (*tīzw*  ) **of a woman.** [...] beans, grind with [...] [...] her (?) at her molars (?) the day she gives birth. [This is] an effective (way) to prevent acute pains, a million [times].¹⁹⁵³

Papyrus Berlin, spell F:¹⁹⁵⁴ (...)this [kind of] womb of this [woman]. Meskhenet, a soul which you have given, Meskhenet, you are complete (as) the hand of Atum, who gave birth to Shu and Tefnut. The one who created went, who knows it in your name of Meskhenet. You made a *k3* for this child who is in the womb of this woman. I made a royal decree to Geb: “He shall make a *k3*.” A *b3* which Nut gives, swaddling-clothes of this child of N.N. You didn’t cause to say anything bad while the condition is good, who will beat ...their mouths of Dju-hotep. It expelled the heritage and provisions of Nut. You take of every god under you and their stars in the starry sky, (and) they do not wander as their stars. Their protection comes, as I protect this N.N. Say the words upon two bricks of [birth by the lector] priest [and he shall place for Nut an offering in]¹⁹⁵⁵ flesh, birds, and incense on fire. Make this spell and clothe (it) in a cloak of fine linen of a garden in his possession.

Often translated as “toothache,”¹⁹⁵⁶ this *tīzw*-pain likely meant a secretion or fluid based on textual parallels,¹⁹⁵⁷ with the only other birth context involving the abnormal birth of Seth in a passage damaged just after *tīzw*.¹⁹⁵⁸ Spell F from Berlin 3027 was notable for the mention of two birth bricks and Meskhenet, the goddess of birth bricks. As will be discuss below, we have an actual example of such birth bricks, on which the woman would have squatted or knelt during labor.¹⁹⁵⁹ Meskhenet as a goddess was particularly linked with childbirth and fate, such as her

¹⁹⁵³ Translation from Collier and Quirke, *UCL Kahun Papyri*, 64.

¹⁹⁵⁴ Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 26; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 24-26.

¹⁹⁵⁵ Suggested translation of this missing portion is provided by Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, p. 26.

¹⁹⁵⁶ Ex: Grundriß IV.1, 268; Westendorf, *Handbuch*, 413-4, 425, 430; Collier and Quirke, *UCL Kahun Papyri*, 59, 63, 64; Strouhal and Vymazalová, *Medicine of the ancient Egyptians*, 108, 144-5.

¹⁹⁵⁷ Kahun spells 5 and 24 (Griffith, *Papyri from Kahun and Gurob*, pl. V-VI); J.H. Breasted, *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus I* (OIP 3; 1930), 180-2 [Case 7, III 8-12].

¹⁹⁵⁸ Gardiner, *The Ramesseum papyri*, 12-13, pl. 41 (2,6). The following analysis on *tīzw* is in large part thanks to personal communication with Rachel Rodabaugh on March 23, 2016.

¹⁹⁵⁹ See §§ 7.2.1-2.

pronouncement of the fate of the three newborn princes from Papyrus Westcar. The spell discussed pleasing Nut using offerings, likely due to her role as a mother goddess.¹⁹⁶⁰

The spells in Leiden I 348 for speeding (*shꜣh*)¹⁹⁶¹ childbirth notably placed the delivery into a mythical context, where several gods and goddesses assisted the woman in labor, the woman herself being identified with goddesses such as Isis (spell 34) and Hathor (spell 28).¹⁹⁶² The spells also used certain amulets, such as figurines of a dwarf (spells 30-31).

Spells 28 and 29,¹⁹⁶³ which attempted to open the womb for the delivery, seem to have been designed for the beginning of childbirth:

Leiden I 348, spell 28 (rt. 13,9-11): **Another spell of accelerating** birthgiving. Open for me! I am the one whose offering is great, the builder (rt. 13,10) who built the pylon for Hathor, the mistress of Dendera, who lifts up in order that she may give birth! Hathor, the mistress of Dendera, is the one who is giving birth! – **This spell is to be recited** (rt. 13,11) **for a woman.**

Leiden I 348, spell 29 (rt. 13,11-vs. 12,2): **Another.** A sound has come into existence during the formations, the sound of the cries of Sekhmet, rejoicing in the Palace! ... descend (vs. 12,1) in gladness, all goddesses rejoice! Be welcome you, heading them! Come, descend with a satisfied heart, you too, who create their name<s>, (vs. 12,1) (you), the one who is with the lord of life in the Palace while the Great One remains on her place! – Eject the liquids of the She-ass to there, they belong to him-of-the-she-ass which has no face!

Spells 28 and 29 stated that the woman was supported or "lifted up," which likely referred to the woman being lifted onto the birth bricks or birthing bed.¹⁹⁶⁴ The builder of the pylon for Hathor in Spell 28 was likely a reference to Khnum, invoking him as the creator of the

¹⁹⁶⁰ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, 26.

¹⁹⁶¹ Ritner, "A uterine amulet," 214; Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 28 and 140, n. 327 and idem, *Ancient Egyptian magical texts*, 39-40, no. 62. It should be noted that the term translated "to accelerate" is problematic: *shꜣt* is written in place of the expected *shꜣh*; cf. idem, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 139-40, n. 326. A word *shꜣt* exists in Demotic meaning "to hinder" (see W. Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar* [Copenhagen, 1954], p. 458), but the wording of the spell demands the meaning "accelerate" or similar "that she may give birth" (see Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 28).

¹⁹⁶² Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 175.

¹⁹⁶³ Translations from Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 28-29.

¹⁹⁶⁴ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 28, 141-2 n. 332.

child's body.¹⁹⁶⁵ Some liquid, seemingly amniotic fluid, was associated with an ass, which, as noted above, invoked Seth.¹⁹⁶⁶ Ass demons occurred in a number of funerary texts as well, namely the Coffin Texts and the Book of the Dead.¹⁹⁶⁷

Leiden I 348 spells 30-31 appear to have been further along the birth process, describing the parturient as "suffering":

Leiden I 348, spell 30 (vs. 12,2-6): **Another spell, of the dwarf.** Oh good (vs. 12,3) dwarf, come, because of the one who sent you – for that is Pre, the one who stands upright while Thoth is sitting down, his feet on the bottom which Nun embraces, his hand on the (roof)-beam. (vs. 12,4) Come down, placenta, come down, placenta, come down! I am Horus who conjures in order that she who is occupied with birthgiving becomes better than she was, as if she (already) delivered! Sepertunes, (vs. 12,5) wife of Horus, Nekhbet, the Nubian, the Eastern one, Unut, mistress of Unut: come to do what you can do! Look, Hathor will lay her (vs. 12,6) hand on her with an amulet of health! I am Horus who saves her! – **To be recited four times over a dwarf of clay placed on the brow of a woman who is giving birth while suffering.**¹⁹⁶⁸

Leiden I 348, spell (vs. 12,6-9): **Another spell, of the vulva.** I am (vs. 12,7) Horus! I had come down from the desert, being thirsty, on a shouting, <I> found somebody, calling, who stood weeping. His wife was nearing her time. I made the calling one stop his weeping (vs. 12,8) – the woman had shouted to the man for a dwarf statue of clay: "Come, let somebody betake himself to Hathor, mistress of Dendera, in order that there may be brought to you her amulet of health and that she may cause to give birth (vs. 12,9) the one who is to give birth! – **This spell is to be recitedand to be placed on the head of the woman who is suffering from it.** En(d).¹⁹⁶⁹

Scholars had generally considered this "dwarf of clay" noted in spells 30 and 31 to mean a figure of Bes, which is logical given his role in childbirth and the protection of women and

¹⁹⁶⁵ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 140, n. 329; P. Dorman, "Creation on the potter's wheel at the Eastern horizon of heaven," in *Gold of Praise: Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honor of Edward F. Wente*, ed. E. Teeter and J. Larson (SAOC 58; 1999), 83-99; Troy, *Patterns of Queenship*, 13.

¹⁹⁶⁶ See B. Stricker, "Asinarii," *OMRO* 46 (1965): 52-75; *ibid.*, "Asinarii II," *OMRO* 48 (1967): 23-43; te Velde, *Seth*, 14.

¹⁹⁶⁷ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 144-5, n. 344; R. Lucarelli, "The vignette of Chapter 40 of the Book of the Dead," in *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Egyptologists*, ed. J.-C. Goyon and C. Cardin (OLA 150.2; Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 1181-6; Ward, "The *h̥iw*-ass," 23-26, 28-29; Westendorf, "Beiträge," 147.

¹⁹⁶⁸ Translation from Borghouts, *Leiden I 348*, 29.

¹⁹⁶⁹ Translation from Borghouts, *Leiden I 348*, 29.

children.¹⁹⁷⁰ Likewise, his iconography at this time consisted of being a dwarfish leonine-face deity.¹⁹⁷¹ Papyrus Turin 1993 of the 19th Dynasty also mentioned a dwarf amulet to aid a patient: "for he (patient) is the faience dwarf."¹⁹⁷² As we have discussed above,¹⁹⁷³ such Bes amulets appeared in the archaeological record as well, especially in the New Kingdom. Though Borghouts had interpreted the *wḏꜣ snb* "amulet of health" as possibly the magician making apotropaic hand gestures,¹⁹⁷⁴ this phrase more likely referred to the dwarf amulet which was the focus of the two spells. Interestingly, spell 30 instructed to repeat the incantation four times, which may be a reference to the four birth bricks. Spell 31 noted the crying of the husband, which Toivari-Viitala and Borghouts had observed closely resembled the situation of Rawoser in the birth story of Papyrus Westcar.¹⁹⁷⁵ This mention of the husband being in the vicinity of the woman giving birth, like the records from Deir el-Medina,¹⁹⁷⁶ was evidence that men could have been present during birth in at least some cases.

Leiden I 348 spell 32 is a curious spell, seeming to conjure the child, and is only known to be a spell about birth due to its placement within the text in the middle of the group of birth spells:¹⁹⁷⁷

Leiden I 348, spell 32 (vs. 12,9-11): **A spell of conjuring with it** the one who lies down in you (?). A good conjuring, a conjuration of eternity: a rod of cord to all sides of whatever finds itself in you! Like Kasepef carrying cords, like the rope (?) of Pre in the hand of Horus-the conjurerer! (vs. 12,11) – **To be recited ...in her right hand.**

¹⁹⁷⁰ Borghouts, *Leiden I 348*, 29; Feucht, *Das Kind*, 100; Janssen and Janssen, *Growing up in ancient Egypt*, 9; Troy, *Patterns of Queenship*, 13.

¹⁹⁷¹ See above, § 2.2.2.

¹⁹⁷² Rt. 4, 14. W. Pleyte and F. Rossi, *Papyrus de Turin I* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1869), 124, 14.

¹⁹⁷³ See § 2.2.

¹⁹⁷⁴ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 154, n. 348.

¹⁹⁷⁵ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 175, note 292; Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 29, 156 n. 376.

¹⁹⁷⁶ See § 5.5.

¹⁹⁷⁷ Translation from Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 30.

The spell named both Horus-the-Conjurer¹⁹⁷⁸ and the obscure god Kasepef,¹⁹⁷⁹ who were otherwise not known for any connection with birth. The phrase *hry.w nwh.w* "carrier of cords" also occurred in the Book of Gates, spell 4: "carrier of cords in the field of the netherworld,"¹⁹⁸⁰ in the context of delineating parcels of lands. Borghouts tentatively had linked this Kasepef to childbirth via the birth of the sun-god in the celestial world.¹⁹⁸¹

Leiden I 348 spell 33 was notable for the parturient inviting Hathor to visit a "pavilion," which may have referred to a birth structure:

Leiden I 348, spell 33 (vs. 12,11-11,2): Another. **Rejoicing, rejoicing** in heaven, in heaven! Birthgiving is accelerated! Come to me, Hathor, my mistress, in my (vs. 11,1) fine pavilion, in this happy hour, with (?) this pleasant north[wind], like when there is hit... falcon, like the listening of a dau[ghter (???) to the voice of her mother (??), like the coming (??)] of a husband to his wife! Rejoicing and jubilating of (vs. 11, 2) those, mysterious [of forms, splendid (??) of] clothes! You are on your way to a house wit(h ...).¹⁹⁸²

This "fine pavilion" likely referred to the birth arbors depicted on ostraca from Deir el-Medina,¹⁹⁸³ making this passage one of the few references to this location. Unfortunately, the ending of the spell, which might give a description of the pavilion, is damaged. The allusion to the north wind and "mysterious [of forms]" likely referred to Amun.¹⁹⁸⁴

Finally, Leiden I 348 spell 34 addressed the situation of a delayed labor, in analogy with that of Isis:

Leiden I 348, spell 34 (vs. 11,2-11,8): [**Another**] spell of accelerating the birthgiving of (cs. 11,3) Isis. "Oh Re and Aton, oh gods who are in [heaven, g]ods who are in the land of Amente and coun[cil of gods who] judge this entire

¹⁹⁷⁸ He otherwise occurred on two Middle Kingdom stelae. See Leitz, *Lexikon* V, 292.

¹⁹⁷⁹ While Borghouts (*Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 160-1, n. 389) interpreted the name in Papyrus Leiden I 348 as a miswriting of Tjasepef (Leitz, *Lexikon* VII, 459.), Leitz (*Lexikon* VII, 271.) considered Kasepef as a separate god. Both are obscure deities.

¹⁹⁸⁰ A. Piankoff, *Les livres des portes*, I (MIFAO 74. Cairo: IFAO, 1937), spell 4, lines 25ff.

¹⁹⁸¹ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 160-163, n. 389.

¹⁹⁸² Translation from Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 30.

¹⁹⁸³ Brunner-Traut, "Wochenlaube," 11-30. See also § 7.4.

¹⁹⁸⁴ *Grundriss* III, 13, notes 5 and 6; Wilkinson, *Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 92.

land, coun[cil of gods who are in the Palace (??)] of On and who are in Let-(vs. 11,4)-opolis, come you! Isis is suffering from her back-part, being pregnant – but her month(s) have been completed, according to the (set) number in pregnancy – with her son, Horus, the protector of his father! But if she spends [her] (vs. 11,5) time without giving birth you will stand dumbfounded, oh Ennead! For then there will be no heaven, for then there will be no earth, for then there will be no offerings for any gods of On, there will arise (vs. 11,6) a weariness in the southern heaven, a disturbance will break out in the northern heaven and lamenting in the chapel! Shu will not rise, Hapi will not flow (vs. 11,7) when he should flow at his time! It is not me who says it and it is not me who repeats it – it is Isis who says it, she repeats it to you! For she spends (already) a time without her son being born, (vs. 11,8) Horus, the protector of his father! – Be careful with the birthgiving of N.N., daughter of N.N., in the same manner!¹⁹⁸⁵

This spell relied on the power of Isis to threaten the gods with cosmic disorder to let delivery take place. The practitioner here acted as a messenger from the goddess, whose childbirth was delayed like that of the patient. Such cosmic threats occurred elsewhere in the medico-magical papyri for other conditions.¹⁹⁸⁶ One example is in Ebers 131, where catastrophe would occur if Re (= the patient) was not relieved of his headache.¹⁹⁸⁷ Papyrus Turin 1993 likewise had a threat: "Stretch out your right arm and your left arm and then make seven knots and set them before the poison. If the poison passes the seven knots which Horus has made in his body, I (magician) will not let the sunlight shine on the ground, I will not let the inundation dash against the embankment, I will set fire to Busiris, I will burn up Osiris!"¹⁹⁸⁸ Our threat took a form, used from at least the New Kingdom, that mentioned the consequences of cosmic upheaval disturbing the cult ceremonies of the gods.¹⁹⁸⁹

¹⁹⁸⁵ Translation from Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 31.

¹⁹⁸⁶ See S. Sauneron, "Aspects et sort d'un thème magique égyptien: les menaces incluant les dieux," *BFSE* 11 (1951): 11-21; H. Grapow, "Bedrohungen der Götter durch den Verstorbenen," *ZÄS* 49 (1911): 48-54; S. Morschauser, *Threat-formulae in ancient Egypt: a study of the history, structure, and use of threats and curses in ancient Egypt* (Halgo, 1991).

¹⁹⁸⁷ Walker, "The place of magic," 92.

¹⁹⁸⁸ Ogdon, "Knots and ties," 33, quoting Papyrus Turin 1993, vs. 3, 6-10.

¹⁹⁸⁹ Sauneron, "Aspects et sort d'un thème magique égyptien," 13-14.

topics of spells,¹⁹⁹⁹ one cannot use the heading in Ebers 800, "Another of loosening the child in the belly of the woman," as definitive proof that Ebers 797-799 discussed the same subject. From the ingredients in each, with Ebers 797 using *njꜣnjꜣ*-plant and Ebers 799 using Lower Egyptian salt, it seems that the spells had a similar function to those of Ebers 800-807, which used the same ingredients. It would thus make sense to include them in this analysis:

Eb 797 (94, 10-11): Another (treatment) for the causing that a woman give to the earth: *njꜣnjꜣ*-plant; would be caused that the woman sits down on it while she is exposed.²⁰⁰⁰

Eb 798 (94, 11-13): Another (treatment) for the causing that all which is in the belly of a woman leaves: shard of a new *hnw*-pot; ground in oil/fat; would be heated, would be poured in her genitals (*iwf*).²⁰⁰¹

Eb 799 (94, 13-14): Another (treatment): date juice in *mšš*-state; Lower Egyptian salt; oil/fat; would be cooked, would be drunk in finer heat.²⁰⁰²

Unlike the other spells for loosening a child, the passage from Ramesseum IV used an incantation along with the application of an ointment:

(How) to drive out (a child) from its mother. My mother is like [...] like Nephthys. What is that he sees on the top of the head of the Great (goddess?) [...] Come out on the ground [...] **Recite this incantation over a bit of ointment spread on top of the head of a woman who is giving birth.**²⁰⁰³

Given this incantation over seemingly nonreligious material, it was possible that the prescriptions from Ebers 797-807 were likely also accompanied by some incantation. Nephthys, who also aided delivery in New Kingdom representations of royal birth²⁰⁰⁴ and in the story of the three princes in Papyrus Westcar,²⁰⁰⁵ seems to have been particularly associated with assisting

¹⁹⁹⁹ For example, Ebers 797 changes subject away that of Ebers 796, which discusses detecting good milk. See Wreszinski, *Der Papyrus Ebers*, 94,8-10. This pattern also occurs in the heading of Leiden I 348 spell 28, see p. 65 above.

²⁰⁰⁰ Transl. *Grundriss* IV.1, 279.

²⁰⁰¹ Transl. *Grundriss* IV.1, 279.

²⁰⁰² Transl. *Grundriss* IV.1, 279.

²⁰⁰³ Transl. Strouhal and Vymazolová, "Mother and child care," 115.

²⁰⁰⁴ See § 7.3.2.

²⁰⁰⁵ See § 5.4.

childbirth, with her described as the midwife supporting the woman from behind, while Isis would have been at the front.

As discussed below,²⁰⁰⁶ it is uncertain whether Ebers 789-790 concerned the placenta or the uterus. The Egyptians thought that both the umbilical cord and the placenta had magical properties,²⁰⁰⁷ and the Deir el-Medina Eastern Necropolis has placenta burials and materials associated with birth.²⁰⁰⁸

During the birth itself, certain spells from Papyrus Ramesseum IV and Berlin 3027 attempted to protect the child and the mother:

Ram IV C 15-16: **Protection made for a child on the day in which it is born.**
[...] a clump of dung against that, after it (the child) has come out from the vulva of his mother [...].²⁰⁰⁹

Ram IV C 20-24: **Then you should say:** Your grace ... brought it (?) without incantations [...] next to this *īšd*-tree of Osiris. Oh you have created and have made the womb, [...] of the dead which has intercourse, impregnates, and embrace during the night and kisses during the day. Do not have intercourse [...] with] this woman, do not fraternize with her, do not do (to her_) any bad or evil thing, your nose [...] your [...] are bleary, do not do any bad or evil thing. **Recite the words above a figurines [of a child], fumigate the woman on it. When it is pleasant, the childbirth will be good. When it is unpleasant, the childbirth [will be bad].**²⁰¹⁰

Berlin 3027, spell G: Another. I was pregnant in *wry.t*. I was born to you in *nṯr*. (9) I cleansed myself, while you were in the “sea of the king of Lower Egypt”. My property belongs to me and to you. My property should be in (VII 1) [...] (?). Speak the words so that Meskenet does not turn the child over to some bad thing. Good.²⁰¹¹

It is unclear whether the piece of dung of Ramesseum IV C 15-16 came from the mother or the child, so it is difficult to determine the significance of the material. Ramesseum IV C 20-

²⁰⁰⁶ See § 5.2.5.2.

²⁰⁰⁷ A.M. Blackman, "Some Remarks on an Emblem upon the Head of an Ancient Egyptian Birth-Goddess," *JEA* 3.2-3 (1916): 199-206.

²⁰⁰⁸ Bruyère, *Rapport* 15, 11.

²⁰⁰⁹ Transl. Strouhal and Vymazolová, "Mother and child care," 115.

²⁰¹⁰ Transl. Strouhal and Vymazolová, "Mother and child care," 115.

²⁰¹¹ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, 27.

24 is the second part of a spell, with the first section a test on whether the child will survive.²⁰¹² Particularly notable about this spell was the lengthy discussion of the threat of a dead person having harmful intercourse with the woman. The ability of a deceased individual being able to procreate may also have occurred in the pleas to the dead.²⁰¹³ The use of the figurine of the child could have invoked the desired result of birthgiving, with its burnt essence, with the aid of the incantation, reaching inside the woman and child. Spell G of Berlin 3027 summoned its protection by placing the birth in divine spaces.²⁰¹⁴ The *wry.t* was a structure in Busiris, where the body of Osiris was fitted together, and it was also place of the mummification,²⁰¹⁵ indicating that spell G associated the father of the child with Osiris and, thus, the child with Horus.²⁰¹⁶ Given the connection of the place *ntrw* to Isis since the Old Kingdom,²⁰¹⁷ the delivery of the woman in this location implied her equation with Isis.²⁰¹⁸

5.2.4.4 Post-birth survival

There are at least fifty-five different spells from six papyri that addressed either the survival of a child or treating post-birth complications in women. Like previous spells, these usually associated the mother with either Hathor or Isis and the child with Horus. Certain materials and amulets seem particularly connected to these texts, as this section will explain below. Given high child mortality rates and risk of birth complications for both mother and child, a number of texts had spells to address potential threats.

²⁰¹² See below, § 5.2.4.4.

²⁰¹³ See § 5.3.

²⁰¹⁴ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, p. 5.

²⁰¹⁵ For this identification, see N. Guilhou, “Rituel funéraire au Moyen Empire: L’oust et la lute contre les insects nécrophages,” *Kyphi* 8 (Lyon, 1994): 25 ff.

²⁰¹⁶ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, 27, note b.

²⁰¹⁷ Ch. Favard-Meeks, *Le temple de Behbeit el-Hagara* (Beihefte SAK 6; Hamburg, 1991), 369 ff.

²⁰¹⁸ Yamazacki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, 27, note d.

5.2.4.4.1 Infant Survival

The vast majority of the post-birth spells pertained to ensuring the survival of the child. The usage of particular amulets, such as knots and certain seals, were particularly common, as well as incantations. Childhood spells addressed a number of concerns, including diagnosing if a baby would survive, general protection, mucus issues, urinary problems, and breast-feeding difficulties.

Soon after birth, both Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom practitioners appeared to have sought to determine the child's viability. Ebers 838 and 839, as well as Papyrus Ramesseum IV C 17-19 tested whether a newborn would survive:

Eb 838 (97, 13-14): Another recognition of a child on the day in which it is born. If it says *njj*, it means that it will live. If it says *mbj*, it means that it will die.²⁰¹⁹

Eb 839 (97, 14-15): Another recognition. If one hears his voice groaning, it means that, it will die. If it turns its face down, it also means that it will die.²⁰²⁰

Ram IV C 17-19: **Another thing that can be done for him on the day of his birth:** a piece of its placenta with [...] pulp with milk and give (it) to him during the day. If he vomits it, he will die. If he [swallows] it, he will live.²⁰²¹

For Ebers 838, the test seems to have been based on whether the child affirmed or negated life.²⁰²² Ebers 839 appeared to have operated under a similar principal, looking for signs that the infant was under distress. While Feucht had stated that the Ramesseum spell indicated that a lumpy placenta would not keep when ground in milk,²⁰²³ the test more likely relied on the same principal seen in some of the fertility spells noted above, where ejecting material associated

²⁰¹⁹ *Grundriß*, IV.1, 291.

²⁰²⁰ *Grundriß*, IV.1, 291.

²⁰²¹ Strouhal and Vymazalová, "Mother and child care," 115.

²⁰²² Feucht, *Das Kind*, 103, N.461: Possibly seen here as an affirmation or negation of life by the child. For the declaration of *mbi* as older form of the Late Egyptian negation *m bjzt*, see H. Schäfer, "Zu Pap. Ebers 97, Z. 13ff.," *ZÄS* 44 (1907): 133.

²⁰²³ Feucht, *Das Kind*, 103, N.465: Ram. IV, C 17-24; H. von Deines, "*Mwt rmt* 'Mutter der Menschen'," *MIO* IV (1956): 31.

with the desired outcome indicated misfortune. In this case, the placenta would be linked with the concept of new life.²⁰²⁴

Knot amulets, which we have already seen in the anti-miscarriage spells, occurred with particular frequency in post-birth spells, with nine treatments. When the material for the knot amulets was specified, it was mostly linen²⁰²⁵ and flax.²⁰²⁶ In other cases, as we have seen in BM 10059 spell 28, the material itself had particular religious connotations:

Berlin 3027, spell N (9,3-7): This Hathor, who is in the middle of the northern sky, whose horns were given in likeness, the hair of Itery in likeness, who cut off the time of two horns, who found giving time of my hair. I made time as a falcon which is in tall hair for a mourner, which was completed two times. Belly of male strength, have you come to Hathor? Did you give her the dead man and dead woman? Spell which makes bitterness. The ...of this child gets warm under [my hand and my] fingers. [Protection] behind protection, protection comes. It is made in a lock of hair which was made in four knots and put to the neck of the child.²⁰²⁷

Berlin 3027, spell V (Rs. 6,1-7):²⁰²⁸ Magic spell for a red woman who gave birth to one who becomes / becomings. Hail to you: Isis twisted and Nephthys spun the knot of the magic cord in seven knots therein. I will protect you therewith him, this child, so that N.N. of N.N. is healthy, in order to make you healthy, in order to make you safe, in order to please for you every god and goddess, in order to fell a male enemy and enemy creature, in order to fell a female enemy and enemy creature, in order to block the name of crushing (?) for you.

As the mouth was stopped, as the mouth was closed to 77 donkeys which were in Knife Lake. I knew it, then I knew their names which were not known by one who is towards harming this child, while he suffers it, the magic spell. One says [this] spell four times upon seven rings of Nubian stone, seven gold, and seven linen cloths spun by two sister mothers. It is one who wove and the other who spun (it), which was made an amulet of seven knots therein it which was placed to the neck of the child in order to protect the body of the child.

In spell N, where the mother was associated with Isis, the lock of hair for the amulet symbolized that of the goddess.²⁰²⁹ It is unclear what condition spell V, a “magical spell for a red

²⁰²⁴ Grundriß III, 15, note e.

²⁰²⁵ BM 10059 spells 29 and 30, and Berlin 3027 spells L and O.

²⁰²⁶ Ram. III B 23-34.

²⁰²⁷ Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 35; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 34-35.

²⁰²⁸ Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 51-52; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 52-54.

²⁰²⁹ Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 34; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 34.

woman who gave birth *hpr.w*” treated, though some scholars had suggested it dealt with abortion.²⁰³⁰ However, the rest of the spell discussed protection of a child, clearly indicating a live birth.²⁰³¹ Grapow et al. had considered that the spell pertained to a premature birth, since it is the treatment of a single child.²⁰³² Yamazaki, however, had interpreted the text to have addressed perhaps multiple births happening sequentially, with the spell repeated for each child.²⁰³³ The term *dšr* appears to have referred to a negative situation,²⁰³⁴ and perhaps blood covered her or she had difficulty in the multiple *hpr.w* "becomings."²⁰³⁵ Whichever the condition, the knot amulet here seems to have derived part of its power by being "spun by two sisters," which was very likely an association with Isis and Nephthys, given their prominence in birth in the texts as well as royal birth scenes.²⁰³⁶ The 77 donkeys appears to have referred to the traditional emissaries of Apophis and enemies of 77 protective deities.²⁰³⁷ The spell's instruction to repeat the incantation four times likely served as another reference to the four birth bricks.

Some texts only mentioned knots in general, such as Papyrus BM 10059 spell 30,²⁰³⁸ Berlin 3027 spell B,²⁰³⁹ Berlin 3027 spell U,²⁰⁴⁰ and a vague spell either for a child or man Ramesseum III B 12-14.²⁰⁴¹ Most spells specified the number of knots to make, with four and seven being the most common. The number of knots seems to have been significant to their function and symbolism, as will be explained below.

²⁰³⁰ J.-C. Goyon, *Les dieux-gardiens et la genèse des temples* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1985), 204.

²⁰³¹ *Grundriß III*, 17; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, 52.

²⁰³² *Grundriß III*, 17.

²⁰³³ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, 52.

²⁰³⁴ *LÄ II*, 124; G. Lefebvre, "Rouge et nuances voisines," *JEA* 35 (1949): 72-76.

²⁰³⁵ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, 52.

²⁰³⁶ For the latter, see § 7.3.2.

²⁰³⁷ Goyon, *Les dieux-gardiens*, 205.

²⁰³⁸ See above, § 5.2.4.2.

²⁰³⁹ See below in § 5.2.4.4.1.

²⁰⁴⁰ See below in § 5.2.4.4.1.

²⁰⁴¹ Translation in *Grundriss IV.1*, 295.

Spells N and O in Berlin 3027 for breast milk,²⁰⁴² and Papyrus BM 10059 spell 28, which protected against miscarriage, all noted the use of four knots. As a number, four seems to have connoted totality, occurring with groups such as the four sons of Horus, the four birth goddesses from Papyrus Westcar,²⁰⁴³ and four magical bricks for both birth and the afterlife,²⁰⁴⁴ and it seems to have been linked to the concept of four cardinal points.²⁰⁴⁵ With the birth context of these spells, the four knots could perhaps have been references for the four birth bricks.²⁰⁴⁶ For a protective amulet such as the knots, this association with totality likely signified that the front, back, and sides of the wearer were protected.

When spells specified the number of knots, the vast majority stated seven knots, and Egyptian magic considered this number particularly potent, associated with perfection and effectiveness.²⁰⁴⁷ The seven-knot amulet occurred in a number of spells for various illnesses and negative situations, such as one of the spells against scorpions in Papyrus Chester Beatty VII.²⁰⁴⁸ In spell 8 of Leiden I 348, Seth healed Horus' headache by tying a string with 7 knots around his left foot.²⁰⁴⁹ In papyrus Turin 135.8-136.1 and ODM 1048, spells for scorpion stings invoked the seven daughters of Re, who were the Seven Hathors, to make seven knots in their seven *idnw* (translated "bands, belts").²⁰⁵⁰

The references to knots that block evil usually indicated a series of linear knotting: a string with several overhand knots one after the other.²⁰⁵¹ Ancient Egyptians used linear knots as

²⁰⁴² For more on this spell, see below.

²⁰⁴³ See below, § 5.4.

²⁰⁴⁴ Roth and Roehrig, "Magical bricks," 121-39. See also below, § 7.2.2.

²⁰⁴⁵ Wilkinson, *Symbol and magic*, 133-135.

²⁰⁴⁶ For further discussion on the number of birth bricks, see § 7.2.2 below.

²⁰⁴⁷ W.R. Dawson, "Seven' in Egyptian Texts," *Aegyptus* 8 (1927): 97-107; Wilkinson, *Symbol and magic*, 135-136.

²⁰⁴⁸ 3,7-4,4.

²⁰⁴⁹ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 18, pl. 4.

²⁰⁵⁰ Wendrich, "Entangled," 251.

²⁰⁵¹ Wendrich, "Entangled," 250.

protection against illnesses, either as prophylactics or curatives.²⁰⁵² Funerary texts commonly referred to ties and lassos for binding captured enemies in order to render them inactive,²⁰⁵³ such as a scene from the Book of Caverns,²⁰⁵⁴ where enemies of Osiris were tied with hands behind their backs "in order to bind (*śnh*) and fetter your enemies." In another example, a spell from the Book of Gates read:²⁰⁵⁵ "You (= enemies) are bowed and fettered with strong ropes, since I (= Ra) have ordered against you that you be bowed (*śnh*), that your arms not being apart." Egyptian magic may have also used knots to heal someone affected by illness, such as that described in Papyrus Turin 1993.²⁰⁵⁶

Other spells for general protection involved the Abdu-fish. Berlin 3027 spells C and M used the fish for warding off threats from the dead:

Berlin 3027, spell C (1,9 – 2,5).²⁰⁵⁷ Another (spell). Flow out, that (male) which comes in darkness, which enters in creeping. His nose is behind him, his head is turned, which fails in coming to it for him. Flow out, that (female) which comes in darkness, which comes in creeping, its nose is behind her, its head is turned over, which fails in coming to for her. Have you (fem.) come in order to kiss this child? I will not let you kiss this child. Have you come to silence? I will not let you silence therein him. Have you come in order to harm him? I will not let you harm him²⁰⁵⁸. Have you come to take him? I will not let you take him. I made his protection against you from sweet clover (?). It is making harm from onions which harm you, from honey which is sweet to people and bitter to the dead therein, from the impediment of the Abdu-fish, from the jaw of binding, from the back of the Nile perch.

Berlin 3027, spell M (8,4 – 9,3): Matter of causing a child of a great screaming voice. These tamarisks are pulled together upon his neck, his *mḥ*²⁰⁵⁹ upon a wild beast, which goes down in the west. He found the way...the sacred serpent of Anubis, which went down to Busiris. Beware of eating the Abdu-fish; take care

²⁰⁵² Wendrich, "Entangled," 250.

²⁰⁵³ Ogdon, "Knots and ties," 29-31.

²⁰⁵⁴ Piankoff, *Les Livres des Portes*, IX, 6.

²⁰⁵⁵ Piankoff, *Les Livres des Portes*, I, lower register.

²⁰⁵⁶ Ogdon, "Knots and ties," 33, n.24, quoting vs. 6-10; Pleyte and Rossi, *Les Papyrus de Turin* I, 135.

²⁰⁵⁷ Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 12; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 14-15.

²⁰⁵⁸ Roth and Roehrig, "Magical bricks," 88 had equated these four threats with the four birth bricks. See discussion below, § 7.2.2.

²⁰⁵⁹ This word occurred only in this text. The meaning is unknown, with *Wb* II listing the word only as a noun.

to protect your bindings. Beware of eating the Abdju-fish; beware of the taking of you tomb. Beware of eating the Abdju-fish; take care to convey your gowns. Beware of eating the Abdju-fish; take care of taking it which is... (You) have eaten the Abdju-fish, you having swallowed its *whnn*, you having dressed yourself in a limb in him. You knew what is above, you knew what is below. You ate the whole Abdju-fish, abomination of a female enemy, N.N., born of N.N. Protection behind protection, protection comes. It is made in the manner of an Abdju-fish. Knots were made in it and (it) was placed to his neck.²⁰⁶⁰

The Abdju-fish had religious connotations, since it occurred along with the tilapia as companion to the solar bark in solar hymns and religious texts,²⁰⁶¹ as well as in vignettes of these texts (Figure 219). In particular, its role seems to have been to warn the solar bark of the arrival of Apophis, such as in the Metternich stele and its variants.²⁰⁶² The apotropaic imagery on certain birth-related objects likewise referenced the nightly journey of the sun god.²⁰⁶³ This Abdju-fish appeared in many other texts, such as in Ebers 405, where the gall of the fish was used "to eliminate white spots in the eyes."²⁰⁶⁴ It also occurred in Ebers 247, where the healer as Isis healed the patient as Re of a headache with this fish.²⁰⁶⁵

²⁰⁶⁰ Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 33; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 32-33.

²⁰⁶¹ See for examples W.R. Dawson, "Studies in Egyptian Medical Texts II.8. The Fish," *JEA* 19 (1933):137; I. Gamer-Wallert, *Fische und Fiskeskult im alten Ägypten*, ÄA 21 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1970), 27-30; 113-115.

²⁰⁶² Gamer-Wallert, *Fische*, 113-114.

²⁰⁶³ See Chapter 6, especially §§ 6.2 and 6.3.3.2.

²⁰⁶⁴ C. Leitz, "Die Rolle vom Religion und Naturbeobachtung bei der Auswahl der Drogen im Papyrus Ebers," in *Papyrus Ebers und die antike Heilkunde: Akten der Tagung vom 15.-16. 3. 2002 in der Albertina/UB der Universität Leipzig*, ed. H-W. Fischer-Elfert (Philippika 7; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), 48.

²⁰⁶⁵ Leitz, "Die Rolle vom Religion," 49.

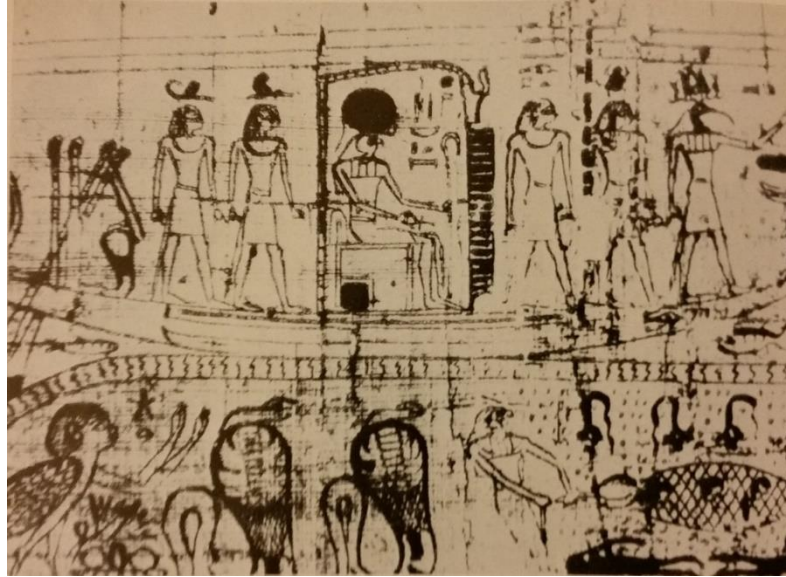


Figure 219 - Tilapia (right) and Abdufish (left) as companions of the solar bark. Turin 1781, Book of Dead of *djhwty*-*ms*. From Gamer-Wallert, *Fische und Fischkult*, pl. XII.1.

Papyrus Berlin 3027 also has several protective spells²⁰⁶⁶ that referred to a hand and seal.

Some scholars assumed that these items were separate amulets:²⁰⁶⁷

Berlin 3027, spell P (Rs. 2,2-7): Spell of knotting for a child and fledgling. Are you warm (in) the nest? Are you burning in the bush? Your mother is not with you; there is no sister therein fanning (you); there is no breast to extend protection therein. Look, it is brought to me a small ball of gold, bead of amethyst (?), a seal, a crocodile, a hand, in order to throw down and remove the love, to warm the body, to remove the male and female enemy of the west. Flow out, this protection!

One should say this spell upon a small gold ball, bead of amethyst (?), a seal, a crocodile, (and) a hand, which are strung upon a fine thread of *ʿd*, made as amulets, and placed to the neck of the child.

Berlin 3027, spell Q (Rs. 2,7 – 3,3): Spell which rescues the dawn over a child. You rise, Re, you rise. When you saw the dead man who came to N.N. of N.N. and the female dead, the woman, to throw the mouth under her upon her doing. [She] will not take the child of...from her arm. “Save (me), Re, my lord!” (says the woman). I will not give you anything, I will not give the child (to) evil

²⁰⁶⁶ Spells P-T, translation below provided by Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 39-45; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 40-46.

²⁰⁶⁷ Reinhard, "Gynäkologie und Geburtshilfe," 136.

beings in the birthing. My hand is upon it, the seal is as your protection. Look, I protect you.

One says this spell upon a seal and a hand, which were made in as an amulet, tied in seven knots, as a knot in the early morning, another in the evening, down to completion of seven knots.

Berlin 3027, spell R (Rs. 3,3-7): You rise, Re, you proceed therein, when you saw the dead man who came to N.N of N.N. and a female dead, the woman, in order to place the mouth under her upon doing plans. She shall not take [the child]. "My lord Re has saved me" so says N.N. I will give you nothing, I will not give (my) load to the male nor female robber.

I place my hand upon you. The seal is your protection. Re goes out. Look, I am one who protects you. One says this spell in the evening when Re rests in life.

Berlin 3027, spell S (Rs. 3,8 – 4,2): A means of protection from another body, which takes the child when the sun rises. You rise, Re, you rise. Did you see the dead man who came to her, N.N. of N.N., [and the dead woman] who subdued to her mouth upon doing plans? (She) will not take her son from her embrace. "You protect me, my lord Re," so says N.N. of N.N. I will give you nothing, [I will] not [give] to you the load of the male and female robber of the west. My hand is upon you, my seal is your protection. Re is he who rises. You flow out, this protection.

Berlin 3027, spell T (Rs. 4,2-6): To be spoken when Re rests in life. You proceed, Re. Did you see the dead man who came [to her, N.N.] of N.N. and the female dead, the woman, who subdues the mouth to her upon doing plans. She shall not take her load to her arms. "Protect me, [my] lord Re," so says N.N. of N.N. I shall give you nothing, I shall not give the load to a male and female robber of the west. My hand is upon you; my seal is your protection. Re is the one who proceeds. Flow out, this protection!

Some scholars had proposed that the text referred to a seal with a hand and crocodile engraved on it, since material examples of such seals exist.²⁰⁶⁸ From his comparison of the seal with a hand and crocodile with scaraboids depicting a hand and enemy head, Ogdon had suggested that the seal with a hand was to prevent the evil force depicted, such as a crocodile.²⁰⁶⁹ In Papyrus Turin 1993,²⁰⁷⁰ one spell read, "I am a messenger of Thoth, having come to bring protection, and the seal of Horus is what is on my hand." A similar passage occurred in Papyrus

²⁰⁶⁸ B. Lesko, "Household and domestic religion in ancient Egypt," 199. Ogdon, "Hand and the seal," 30.

²⁰⁶⁹ Ogdon, "The hand and the seal," 30.

²⁰⁷⁰ Verso 4,12 – 5,4. Cited in Ogdon, "The hand and the seal," 30.

Chester Beatty VII:²⁰⁷¹ "What I (= the magician) have enclosed (*ʿnb*) in my right hand, what I have enclosed in my left hand, I have enclosed it like (?) Horus, I have enclosed it with seven knots." Spells described these evil forces as "grasped" by the seal, as indicated in Papyrus BM 10042:²⁰⁷² "their mouths having been sealed (*htm*) as the seven great boxes (*htm*) were sealed (*htm*) which were closed forever." Another spell similarly read, "Stand still for me, scorpion! I will enclose (*ʿnb*) and seal (*htm*) your mouth."²⁰⁷³ The circular border of a seal could also have acted as a containment mechanism in Egyptian magic.²⁰⁷⁴

There was likewise a fear of being grasped in Egyptian funerary literature, which also demonstrates that a seal with a hand was considered a means of protection. Examples include "I am not grasped by Shu, I am not seized (*ʿmm*) by the Aberu,"²⁰⁷⁵ "Shu does not grasp (*hʿr*) me,"²⁰⁷⁶ and "I am not grasped (*hʿr*) by Shu, I am not seized (*ʿmm*) by the Aberu The light does not leave me."²⁰⁷⁷

Yamazaki, however, had argued that if spells P-T meant a seal with a crocodile and a hand on it, the phraseology should be formulated linguistically different as * *htm nty msh ʿdr.t hr.f*.²⁰⁷⁸ Whichever the interpretation of the spells, the hand served a protective function,²⁰⁷⁹ with the protective laying of hands on a person noted in other spells.²⁰⁸⁰ As for the crocodile from

²⁰⁷¹ Rt. 3,7 – 4,4. Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri of the British Museum*, 58, pl. 33-34; Ogdon, "The hand and the seal," 31.

²⁰⁷² Rt. 8,5-9. Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri of the British Museum*, 61, pl. 35; Ogdon, "The hand and the seal," 31.

²⁰⁷³ ODeM 1213 = Papyrus Chester Beatty V, vs. 3,1-2. Cited in Ogdon, "The hand and the seal," 31.

²⁰⁷⁴ Ogdon, "The hand and the seal," 32.

²⁰⁷⁵ CT II, 112e.

²⁰⁷⁶ CT VI, 95m.

²⁰⁷⁷ CT II, 112e-g.

²⁰⁷⁸ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 41.

²⁰⁷⁹ C. Müller-Winkler, *Die ägyptischen Objekt-Amuletten* (Freiburg, Schweiz, 1987), 180-2.

²⁰⁸⁰ A. Massart, *The Leiden Magical Papyrus I 343 + I 345* (Leiden: Brill, 1954), 78, note 12.

Berlin 3027 spell P, if it were a separate figure, as opposed to an image on the seal, it might relate to Taweret, who was often shown with a crocodile tail.

Spells Q-T were basically the same spell, with Q and S directed for the morning, and R and T for the night.²⁰⁸¹ Given the similarity to the spells with the formulae on magic wands, Altenmüller had suspected that the “hand” in these spells could have meant such a wand.²⁰⁸² Hornung and Staehelin,²⁰⁸³ however, understood the “hand” and the “seal” more as amulet figures which were hung as two “hand” figures on a chain, such as spell P.²⁰⁸⁴ This group of four spells was also notable, since, while spells Q and R were written for a male child, spells S and T were for a girl.²⁰⁸⁵

Besides the spells for protection discussed above from Berlin 3027,²⁰⁸⁶ there was an additional spell, spell U,²⁰⁸⁷ which is an example of a “limb deification”:

Means of protection made upon this child. Your protection is the protection of the sky and protection of the land; your protection is the protection of the night; your protection is the protection of the day; your protection is the protection of gold; your protection is the protection of Nubian stone; your protection is the protection of Re; Your protection is the protection of the seven gods, who formed the land and destroy...who save hearts in the place thereof.

Your peak is Re, the healthy child; Your back of the head is Osiris; your forehead is Satis, Lady of Elephantine; your temple is Neith; your eyebrows are the lord of the east; your eyes are the lord of everyone; your nose is the word of gods; your ears are both royal serpents; your upper arm is the living falcon; Your arm is Horus; the other is Seth; your side is Sopd; the other is Nut, who gave birth to the gods, [your...is] the box of pure taking (?) in Heliopolis that every god is in; your heart is Montu; your chest is Atum; your lungs are Min; your gallbladder is Nefertem; your spleen is Sobek; Your liver is [Harsaphes] of [Helio]poli[s]; your bowls are healthy; your navel is the morning star; your lower leg is Isis; the other

²⁰⁸¹ Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mütter und Kind*, 41.

²⁰⁸² Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 183.

²⁰⁸³ Hornung and Staehelin, *Skarabäen*, 124 f.

²⁰⁸⁴ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 41.

²⁰⁸⁵ Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mütter und Kind*, 41; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 41.

²⁰⁸⁶ Spells C, D, N, P, and Q-T.

²⁰⁸⁷ Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mütter und Kind*, 48-49; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 48-51.

is Nephthys; your feet (are)...take...them upon you; your calves are two vessels...river...;your toes are snakes;

...it, which made...adore...upon...because of a spell...spell in your name. The limbs therein you are not empty...it is every god who protects [your] name (and) [everything which is in (?)] you; Every milk which you had suck therein, (every) embrace which is given upon it, every leg upon which you divide, (all) your clothes which you wear therein, every...which you brought the day therein. Every protection which is made upon you, every means of protection which was placed upon you, (every knot) which was tied for you, every amulet which was placed to your throat. He protects you therewith them; he causes you to be healthy therewith them; he lets you be safe therewith them; he makes content for you every god and every goddess therewith them.

The spell consisted of two parts, with and without an explicit address, the second part can be in turn be subdivided into two. In the first part without address, the reciter was identified with seven primeval deities. Then he, who now had their (the gods') power, turned to the child (part 2). He granted him protection first by "member deification" of his individual body parts and then by the things with which it comes into contact.²⁰⁸⁸ This spell was to be spoken over a ring of gold and *ibh3wti*, which Erman had identified with *ibhtj*, a term which occurred as a costly stone in Karnak.²⁰⁸⁹

Spells against specific illnesses likewise used specific materials and amulets. One such spell, Berlin 3027 spell L, mentioned consuming a mouse and using its bones in an amulet against *ssmy*:

Berlin 3027, spell L (7,6-8,3): Repelling *ssmy*. Oh, who is in the water, go and say to yourself to this court which is in her shrine, to Sekhmet, when she came behind the residence [because] the matter (?) and [as (?)] Wadjet, Lady of Buto appeared, that for her the milk this big, awake [?] (?) mouse that was in her hole, when for her *snw.t* and *dnj.t* is celebrated in Heliopolis: The giving of his eye by the Great to another beautiful one, in order that Seth saw <it> (?). One should say this spell, in which one lets this child or {your} mother eat a cooked mouse, while its bones of its neck are placed in a cloth of fine linen. One makes seven knots.²⁰⁹⁰

²⁰⁸⁸ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, 51.

²⁰⁸⁹ Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mütter und Kind*, 50; Brugsch, *Tehs*. P. 1178.

²⁰⁹⁰ Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 30; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 30-31.

It should be noted that there is some archaeological evidence for the use of mouse to treat children. Excavations of a Predynastic cemetery in Naga ed-Der found that, in the digestive systems of a number of children, there were remains of mouse.²⁰⁹¹ Mice only occurred in two other medical-magical spells that don't relate to each other,²⁰⁹² so it is difficult to tell the symbolic meaning of the animal. There was perhaps a similar amulet of mouse bones in a cloth with knots in pDeir el-Medina 36, only mice bones should instead lie in a folded sheet of papyrus.²⁰⁹³

Treatments for *nšw*, which seems to have been some mucus issue, occurred in Papyrus Ramesseum IV C 6-7²⁰⁹⁴ and Berlin 3027 spell A²⁰⁹⁵ and spell E.²⁰⁹⁶ The latter, like Berlin 3027 spell U, was a limb deification. While the former treated the issue with a prescription of Lower Egyptian barley and plant mucilage, Berlin 3027 spell A used as amulets a bead of lapis lazuli, green malachite, and a red bead. These beads likely were chosen for their colors, with blue representing flooding, green with life and healing, and red with blood and the sun.²⁰⁹⁷ Spell E likewise used grain and plant material, including sycamore. The sycamore had particular connections to Hathor,²⁰⁹⁸ which likely explains its presence in the spell. In particular, given the tree's association with the Eastern Horizon and the rise of the sun,²⁰⁹⁹ spell E may have implicitly linked the child to the sun god.

²⁰⁹¹ E. Smith, *The ancient Egyptians*, 2nd ed. (London: Harper, 1923), 50; W.R. Dawson, "The mouse in Egyptian and later medicine," *JEA* 10.2 (1924): 83-84.

²⁰⁹² Ebers 85,5 and Hearst Medical Papyrus 149 (10,10-11). See Dawson, "The mouse," 84.

²⁰⁹³ S. Sauneron, "Le rhume d'Anyakhté (Pap. Deir el-Médinéh 36)," *Kêmi* 20 (1970): 8; Yamazaki, *Berlin 3027*, p. 30, fig. 1.

²⁰⁹⁴ For translation, see *Grundriß* IV.1, 294.

²⁰⁹⁵ For translation, see Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, 9.

²⁰⁹⁶ For translation, see Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, 18-20.

²⁰⁹⁷ H. Kees, "Farbensymbolik in ägyptischen religiösen Texten." *NAWG* 11 (1943): 413-479; J. Gwyn Griffiths, "The symbolism of red in Egyptian religion," in *Ex orbe religionum: studia Geo Widengren, XXIV mense apr. MCMLXXII quo die lustra tredecim feliciter explevit oblata ab collegis, discipulis, amicis, collegae magistro amico congratulantibus* 1, ed. J. Bergman, K. Drynjevff, and H. Ringgren (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 81-90; Wilkinson, *Symbol and magic*, 107-108.

²⁰⁹⁸ Buhl, "Goddesses of the Egyptian Tree-cult," 86, 87-88; S. Aufrère, *L'univers minéral dans la pensée égyptienne*, II (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale due Caire, 1991), 499-500.

²⁰⁹⁹ Buhl, "Goddesses of the Egyptian Tree-cult," 87-88; Aufrère, *L'Univers minéral*, 500.

There are preserved six different spells for treating urinary problems in a child: Ebers 262, 272, 273, Ramesseum III A 30-1, Ramesseum C 12-15, and Ramesseum IV A 1-2.²¹⁰⁰ Ramesseum III A 30-1 was parallel to Ebers 762, using reed, beer and shell to be drunk by either a parent or the child. Ebers 273 was notable for having its prescription, glass flow cooked to a bead, given in different ways depending on whether the child was younger or older. Ebers 262 used a strange ointment involving an old book cooked in oil/fat, while Ramesseum IV A 1-2 against constipation prescribed resin from a *hin*-vessel. Most notable of these spells was Ramesseum III C 12-15, which had an incantation, where the mother was equated with Isis, written on green cloth which was applied to the neck of the child. This green cloth likely invoked green's associations with life.²¹⁰¹

The equation of the mother and child to Isis and Horus also occurred in a couple of spells from Berlin 3027. One, spell B, worked against a child-illness called *tmyt*, while spell D combated the demon *ʿššyw*:

Berlin 3027, spell B: (1,4-9):²¹⁰² Flow out, *tmyt*, bone-breaking, stone shattering, which enters...blood vessel. Come going from the field to the marshland to the end of the ʿ**sb**-tree. The voice of Re calls Nephthys upon her stomach being ill [with] this [child], who Isis gave birth. “With whom was it conjured as to it?” It was conjured in secrets of the courtyard, when (it) fell and it came down. Look, fire has come down. “With whom was it extinguished as for him?” It was extinguished with secrets of the courtyard. [So I brought(?)] the secrets of the courtyard...it, in order for one to expel upon the head, upon the top of the head, upon all the body, which Khnum created for this child whom his mother bore.

Berlin 3027, spell D: (2,6 – 2,10):²¹⁰³ Magical spell (against) *ʿššyw* (?), daughter of *ʿttyw* (?), the festival day upon sealing a brick for your father Osiris. That which you say to [your] father [Osiris]: “He lives on the *ḏšs*-plant and upon honey.” Flow out, you Asiatic woman, who came upon the desert, [you] Nubian who came upon the wilderness. Are you she who is a maidservant? Come in spittle. Are you she who is a noble lady? Come in his urine. Come in the sneeze

²¹⁰⁰ For translations, see *Grundriß* IV.1, 294-295.

²¹⁰¹ Wilkinson, *Symbol and magic*, 108.

²¹⁰² Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 11; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 12-13.

²¹⁰³ Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 14-15; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 16-17.

of his nose; come forth from the sweat of his body. My arms are upon this child (and) the arms of Isis are upon him as she places her arms upon (her) son Horus.

The phrase *itnw n h* "secrets of the courtyard" seems to have meant some sort of means of magic and only appeared in this text.²¹⁰⁴ While a similar phrase using *h* "courtyard" materialized elsewhere, it is currently unknown from the context where exactly this "courtyard" would be. While it is uncertain what spell D exactly meant by sealing the brick "for your father Osiris," the sealing seems to have worked to contain the demon.²¹⁰⁵ As will be discussed below,²¹⁰⁶ Asiatics and Nubians occurred in these spells as a possible threat to the mother and child.

Another set of spells using Isis and Horus imagery are those to treat *b^c*-illness. From the evidence, *b^c* has been conventionally interpreted as some kind of malady that an infant would catch from breast milk.²¹⁰⁷ Besides Berlin 3027 spell H,²¹⁰⁸ Papyrus Ramesseum III B20-23, Ram. III B 23-34, and Berlin 3027 spell I have noteworthy features:²¹⁰⁹

Ram III B 20-23: Elimination of *b^c*-illness; what one says as magic. (a very destroyed magical spell follows) [...] thorn acacia; rotated to the left, given to the child in his throat (*hh*). This is an elimination of the *b^c*-illness.²¹¹⁰

Ram III B 23-34: [...] I am the one who came from the Delta [...], so says Isis, the goddess. My *smz*-hair was disheveled, my head hair (*šnj*) hung down to me, <when> I found my son Horus, while his heart (*ib*) was weary, both [his] lips green, both his elbows soft, after he had sucked the *b^c*-illness, which is in my breast (*šn^c*), <and> the bitterness (*dh^cw.t*) [...] my breast (*mnd*) [...] Isis, so says Horus.

May you flow out, evil *b^c*-illness, in which your name *b^c*, which the heart (*ib*) extracts, which makes both elbows soft of that, in which it acts (*wdf*) slowly. "Come against people with me, my mother!" says Horus, <and you> sister of my mother, Nephthys, to the place where the nurses <and> attendants of Nut are, that

²¹⁰⁴ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 12, note j.

²¹⁰⁵ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, Spell D, note b.

²¹⁰⁶ See § 5.2.6.

²¹⁰⁷ Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 291.

²¹⁰⁸ See below, § 5.2.4.4.1.

²¹⁰⁹ For translation of Berlin 3027 Spell K, see Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 30.

²¹¹⁰ *Grundriß* IV.1, 293.

they tell us what they did for their children, so that we make the corresponding for our child [...].

[...] Isis, the goddess, together with Nephthys: "I have come for my son Horus; his heart (*ib*) is weary, both [his] elbows [are soft] [...the *b^c*-illness, which is in] my breast (*šn^c*), <and> the bitterness (*dh^cw.t*) which is in my breast (*mnd*).

Its protection agents: one should be sealed with seven flax (threads), twisted <and> spun (*hsf*) [by] the newly delivered; one should fetch a swallow which is <still> in its nest. One should make up with [...] eye make-up [...] this child and his mother. <Then it is the case>: his *b^c*-illness <belongs> to the swallow.

One says this spell over seven flax (threads), twisted <and> spun by spinning (*hsf*) by the newly delivered; seven knots will be made on it, will be given to the child on his throat (*hh*); then one should fetch a swallow [...] in his beak [...].²¹¹¹

Berlin 3027, spell I (7,3-5): Another (spell). Ends of papyrus, *w^ch*-legume, ground and sifted upon milk of she who gave birth to a male. A jar therein is given to the child, so that he makes day and night, him while sleeping safely.²¹¹²

Papyrus Ramesseum III B 20-23 used the acacia likely as a sacred tree and, thus,

sufficiently powerful enough to capture and return evil since it could have represented Osiris.²¹¹³

Osiris may therefore have sought to protect his offspring, to whom the breastfed child was

assimilated here.²¹¹⁴ Acacia was also the tree of Taweret.²¹¹⁵ In the Coffin Texts, both Hathor

and Re held associations with acacia.²¹¹⁶ Ebers 829,²¹¹⁷ a spell against bleeding, likewise featured

acacia. Interestingly, as Wilkinson noted,²¹¹⁸ Egyptian women in early modern times bathed in

the water from boiled acacia-pods or they inhaled the steam soon after giving birth. It was likely

this association of acacia with birth that explains the occurrence of acacia-seed-shaped beads in

the tombs of women.²¹¹⁹

²¹¹¹ *Grundriß* IV.1, 293-4.

²¹¹² Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 29; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 29.

²¹¹³ P. Koemoth, *Osiris et les arbres: Contribution à l'étude des arbres sacrés de l'Égypte ancienne* (Liège: Université de Liège, 1994), 170-175.

²¹¹⁴ Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 273.

²¹¹⁵ Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions*, III, 753, 5 and 12.

²¹¹⁶ See references in B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus*, 332.

²¹¹⁷ For translation, see *Grundriß* IV.1, 280.

²¹¹⁸ A. Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery* (London: Methuen & Co, 1971), 81, nn. 29-30.

²¹¹⁹ See above, § 4.3.

In Ramesseum III B 23-34, an incantation helped to transfer the *bꜥ*-illness from an infant to a swallow while protective knots were placed on the throat of the child. It makes sense in Ramesseum III B 24-34 that the swallow, to aid in the transfer of the illness, was decorated in the same fashion as the mother and child, with galena eye-paint.²¹²⁰ This swallow seems to have held solar associations, being illustrated in Papyrus Ani (BM EA 10470) on the prow of the bark of Re.²¹²¹ In the Pyramid Texts, in its ascent to heaven, the king was compared to a swallow flying like a hawk.²¹²² Papyrus Berlin 3038 spell 15,²¹²³ against a breast malady, and Ramesseum III A 1-2 worked by invoking the "protection of the swallow."²¹²⁴ The use of the swallow here seems to have been based on the association of the bird with Isis,²¹²⁵ equated in this spell with the mother.

Berlin 3027 spell I has several notable features. The use of papyrus likely referenced the marshlands in which Isis hid Horus after birth to protect him from Seth.²¹²⁶ Along the same vein, the milk of a mother who gave birth to a boy is an ingredient associated with Isis.²¹²⁷ The reference to protection for day and night are akin to those in other spells and birth objects.²¹²⁸ As we will discuss in more detail below,²¹²⁹ beds and bedroom objects have a close association with birth and fertility iconography, so the reference to the child sleeping safely fits this relationship.

²¹²⁰ Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 298.

²¹²¹ R.O. Faulkner and Eva Melita von Dassow, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead. The Books of Going forth by Day* (San Francisco: California Chronicle Books, 1998), pl. 21.

²¹²² Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, 259, line 1770a.

²¹²³ Wreszinski, *Papyrus Berlin 3038*, 2,2-3.

²¹²⁴ Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 371.

²¹²⁵ Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 306-308; H. Te Velde, "The Swallow as Herald of the Dawn in Ancient Egypt," *Ex Orbe Religionum: studia Geo Widengren, XXIV mense apr. MCMLXXII quo die lustra tredecim feliciter explevit oblata ab collegis, discipulis, amicis, collegae magistro amico congratulantibus*, I, ed. by J.K. Bergman et al. (Leiden: Brill, 1972), p. 31; and R. Wassermann, "Schwalbe" in *LÄ V* (1984), col. 754 and note 14.

²¹²⁶ Example of this myth in Naville, *XIth Dynasty Temple I*, 66.

²¹²⁷ See also above, §§ 5.2.4.1 and 5.2.5.1 (under *bddw-kꜣ*).

²¹²⁸ See London spell 30; Berlin 3027, spells I, Q-U; as well as § 6.3.2.1

²¹²⁹ Ex. §§ 6.2.16.1, 7.4-5; see also above, §§ 3.2.6 and 3.5.

In addition to spells pertaining to a possible milk-borne illness, other spells discussed issues with breast-feeding itself. Four spells from Papyrus Ramesseum III treated thirst,²¹³⁰ three of which are preserved enough to analyze:²¹³¹

Ram III B 10-11: Causing that a child accepts {the breast}, when it does not suck. Swallowing part of Horus, chewing part of Seth [...].

Ram III B 14-17: Quenching the thirst of a child.
Your hunger will be taken away by [...], [will take away] four thirst by the <god> "great flood" from heaven [...] (Note 1). Your thirst is in my fist, your hunger is in my grasp, [...] the *hsz.t*-cow, her breast in your mouth. It is your mouth, it is the mouth of the *hsbs*-bird upon the discharge (? *rwj.t*) of Osiris. Do not eat your hunger, do not drink your thirst, you throat (*hh*) does not make insensitivity (?). Tell it to the man this spell over [...] of earth (?); given on linen (*ʿz.t*) of [...], made to [...].

Ram III B 19-20: Elimination of thirst [...] child.
[...] will stand at night in water; you take {it} out early in the morning; crushed, strained through [linen], will be given to him in a *hin*-vessel.

Though unfortunately damaged in the second half, Ramesseum III B 10-11 seems to have invoked Horus as the model of how the baby was supposed to act, that is to say swallowing the breastmilk, as opposed to the chewing by Seth. The other two texts, which seem to be parallel, involved straining a substance through linen before letting the infant drink it. Hesat was a goddess particularly associated with breast-feeding and milk,²¹³² making her appropriate for Ramesseum III B 14-17 to invoke.

5.2.4.4.2 Mother/Nurse Care

Along with threats to the child, the post-birth period posed potential complications for the mother. These issues ranged from those harming the mother herself to those affecting her ability to effectively care for her infant. There are at least sixteen different spells addressing women's

²¹³⁰ Spells A 9, B 10-11, B 14-17, and 19-20.

²¹³¹ Translations from *Grundriß* IV.1, 292.

²¹³² Wilkinson, *Gods and Goddesses*, 173-174.

health after labor, with contracting the uterus and maintaining a continuous milk supply making up the vast majority.

Ebers 820-827, which attempted to "cool and contract the uterus," seem likely to have addressed a woman post-birth. Unfortunately, many of the materials in these prescriptions, which were all poured in the vagina, are either not known, or have unclear significance. Many of these spells seem to have relied on sweet-tasting substances, such as honey,²¹³³ juices,²¹³⁴ and milk,²¹³⁵ or otherwise liquids and oils.²¹³⁶

Cases No. 4 and No. 6 in Papyrus Kahun suggest obstetrical connotations in translation, having treated complications seemingly resulting from the patient's childbirth, but the nature of the spells is unclear:

Kahun, spell 4 (1, 12-15): Healing of a woman, who [suffers] in her pubic area (*kns*), her vulva, the vicinity of her vulva, between her buttocks.
Then you say to this: [this is] a great enlargement <as a result of> of birth.
Then you should make against it: new oil, a *hin*; will pour into [her] vulva, her [...].

Kahun, spell 6 (1, 20-22): Healing [of a woman], who has become sick in all her members, <and> who suffers in both her eye sockets.
Then you should say about it: this is the *gz.t*-phenomenon <as a result of> the uterus. It is not possible for her to drink ... entirely due to a fresh birth.
Then you should make against it: *hpz* of mash (*zḥ*) with (*ḥr*) water; to be drunk [four] mornings.²¹³⁷

Along the same vein as many of the post-birth spells for children, a number of treatments for women addressed testing for and ensuring quality breast milk for the baby. These varied from quality tests of the milk, ensuring supply, and reducing overflow from the breasts. Since evidence

²¹³³ Spells 821 and 823.


²¹³⁴ Spells 823, 825-827.

²¹³⁵ Spells 822 and 823.

²¹³⁶ Spells 820 and 824.

²¹³⁷ *Grundriß* IV.1, 289.

from literary texts suggest that breast-feeding in Egypt lasted for three years,²¹³⁸ maintaining a continual supply would likely pose difficulties.

Two spells, Ebers 788 and 796,²¹³⁹ tested the quality of breastmilk based on smell, though there is some religious basis for that determination. Namely, Egyptians associated fish with the concept of *bwt*  “abomination,”²¹⁴⁰ which would be in contrast to the nutsedge of the later spell:

Eb 788: **Regarding bad milk.** You have to regard her odor like stink of fish.

Eb 796: **Regarding good milk.** Her stink (is) like meal of nutsedge. It is a distinguishing of what she found.

Two further spells attempted to ensure the milk supply of the mother/nurse. While Berlin 3027 spell O used a threat incantation,²¹⁴¹ Ebers 836 prescribed a topical treatment:

Berlin 3027, spell O (9,8 – Rs. 2,2): Means of protection of a woman upon milk. Shouting in the sky, mourning in the Duat, calamity in...I gave my two arms...upon their two heads...mountain... The water is empty, while there are no fish of Sobek. He ate food which is in this turning over Ra upon his side twice. She says, “You are upon mixing justice upon this which that enemy, dead man and dead woman, does.” Spell for milk, I *bꜣ* my two arms in turn, the two breasts in the hand of Tait. (You) go down...to search his bread. [You] spun after you plaited after...you ... upon the leg. You tied three knots. It was knotted and placed upon the neck of Horus, when he makes in (the morning) in order to save him from his enemy. It is made in four linen cloths of...It is spun with twisting, it is twisted in likeness of...Four knots were made therein and (it) was placed to the neck of this child. It is his saving from his enemy.²¹⁴²

²¹³⁸ F.J. Chabas, *Les Maximes du scribe Ani d'après le papyrus hiératique no. IV du Musée de Boulaq avec double transcription, traduction analytique et commentaire perpétuel* (Chalon-sur-Saône: J. Dejussieu, 1876-1878), pl. xx, 1, 17; P. Vernus, *Sargesses de l'Égypte Pharaonique* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2010), 250.

²¹³⁹ Wreszinski, *Der Papyrus Ebers*, 93,17-20 and 94,8-10.

²¹⁴⁰ Wb. I, 453.4-454.8. For meaning and symbolism of *bwt*, see for ex. P. Frandsen, “*Bwt* in the Body,” in *Social Aspects of Funerary Culture in the Egyptian Old and Middle Kingdoms: Proceedings of the International Symposium held at Leiden University 6-7 June, 1996* (OLA 103; Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 141-174; *ibid.* “Le fruit défendu dans l'Égypte ancienne,” *BSEG* 25 (2002-2003): 57-74.

²¹⁴¹ For the use of threat incantations, see above, § 5.2.

²¹⁴² Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 36-37; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 36-39.

Eb 836 (97, 10-11):²¹⁴³ **Ramener le lait à une nourrice que tête un enfant:**
épine dorsale d'un poisson-combattant. (Ce) sera bouilli dans de la graisse/huile.
Enduire avec (cela) son dos (= celui de la nourrice).

Spell O began with the description of a large disaster, which excited horror, which Erman had believed that the breast of Isis was meant, which was dried up.²¹⁴⁴ Similar to previous mentions of this goddess in the miscarriage spells, Tait served to imbue the knots with power. The Nile perch, also used in Berlin 3027 spells B and C, was the sacred animal of Neith, representing her within the deep waters of the primeval ocean.²¹⁴⁵ In her mother-goddess role, she was the mother of Re and Sobek since the New Kingdom,²¹⁴⁶ and was frequently represented breastfeeding two small crocodiles.²¹⁴⁷ Likewise, the conception scenes from the New Kingdom birth legends depicted in Deir el-Bahari and the temple of Luxor depicted her with Serket supporting the bed with the queen-mother and Amun.²¹⁴⁸

Besides milk supply, Egyptians in both the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom treated other breastmilk-related issues. Ebers 808 and 809 discussed an unclear issue called *gsw*, which possibly was an overflow of breast milk,²¹⁴⁹ while Berlin 3027 spell H treated milk-borne illness *bꜥꜥ*:

Eb 808: **Beginning of prescription of preventing falling of nipples (*bn.tj*).**
Bathe them in blood which her menstruation gives. Anoint her belly (and) her thighs therein, so that *gsw* does not happen to her.

Eb 809: **Another of preventing *gsw* for a woman.** Dried liver of a swallow, grated upon fermented herbal decoction. Give to the woman to her breasts, to her belly, (and) to all her limbs which become *gsw* to her.

²¹⁴³ Hieroglyphic transcription Wreszinski, *Der Papyrus Ebers*, 97,10-11. Transl. Bardinete, *Les papyrus médicaux*, 450.

²¹⁴⁴ Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mütter und Kind*, 36-7.

²¹⁴⁵ R. Schlichting, "Neith," *LÄ IV* (1982): 392-4.

²¹⁴⁶ Schlichting, "Neith," 393-4.

²¹⁴⁷ S. Schott, "*Rš-n.t* und *Mḥ-n.t* als Häuser der Neith," *RdE* 19 (1967): 107, Abb. 5.

²¹⁴⁸ Brunner, *Die Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 55-7.

²¹⁴⁹ See below in § 5.2.5.3.

Berlin 3027, spell H (7,2-3): Repelling *bꜥ*-illness. Oil (?) of sycamore, fresh date wine, *ḥmw*-jar of castor, hemp (?), vegetal buffer of beverage, *mstꜣ*-drink, to be drunk by the woman.²¹⁵⁰

In contrast to certain translations,²¹⁵¹ Ebers 808 did not use "blood of a girl's first menstruation," but the renewed menstruation of the woman in question.²¹⁵² It is perhaps possible that the text invoked menstruation as evidence of a woman not being pregnant, in order to reduce overly fecund breasts, though there is currently not enough evidence to prove this interpretation. Ebers 809 mentioned "liver of swallow" *mjzt nt mnt*, which is notable since Egyptians viewed the liver as the source of desire defining the behavior of an individual, such as Maat being described as sitting in the liver of Re.²¹⁵³ This swallow likely had similar meaning to its use in Ramesseum III B 23-34.²¹⁵⁴ The dark and bloody color of liver may also have invoked similar principles as the woman's menstruation.²¹⁵⁵ As spell H indicates, the *bꜥ*-illness, which occurred in a number of passages, was something the mother could pass to the child, so this particular treatment sought to associate the mother with Hathor, via the sycamore oil,²¹⁵⁶ to prevent her passing the sickness.

5.2.5 Lexikon

The medico-magical texts discussed above referenced terminology of varying specificity, the understanding of which becomes necessary to comprehend the spells. These words designated plant ingredients particular to feminine health issues, female body parts, or conditions specialized to women, such as "purification." Unfortunately, the meaning of many of these terms often remains uncertain or were broader than our modern equivalent vocabulary. Despite these

²¹⁵⁰ Erman, *Zaubersprüche*, 28; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 28.

²¹⁵¹ For example, Strouhal and Vymazalová, "Mother and child care," 119.

²¹⁵² H. von Deines, "Die Rezepte Eb 808 und 809 im Pap. Ebers, um *gs.w* bei einer Frau zu behandeln," *GM* 19 (1976): 20.

²¹⁵³ Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 305.

²¹⁵⁴ Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 303.

²¹⁵⁵ Deines, "Die Rezepte Eb 808 und 809," 18.


²¹⁵⁶ For another usage of sycamore, see above in § 5.2.4.4.1.

difficulties, one can deduce the general meaning of some of these expressions and the use of certain ingredients.

5.2.5.1 Plant Ingredients

Of about 500 materials listed in the medico-magical texts, most remain uncertain or unclear even when written with a determinative to indicate the type of material, especially plants. Of the plants, Germer²¹⁵⁷ estimated that it was possible to identify only 20% of 160 plant products from the texts.²¹⁵⁸ Notably, except for the castor-oil plant in Ebers 251, the texts provided no explanation of the desired natural effect from the materials.



(*bddw-k3*): Among its medical uses, *bddw-k3* occurred predominantly in spells involving external treatments.²¹⁵⁹ The previous interpretation of *bddw-k3* as watermelon²¹⁶⁰ appears unlikely, since there are no references to the plant as a fruit and, the word occurred almost exclusively with the determinative . Based on these factors, Germer and Westendorf had interpreted *bddw-k3* as some kind of herb.²¹⁶¹

This plant seems to have been connected with Seth, while the mother's milk was known from other spells to have had associations with Isis.²¹⁶² Thus, Westendorf had translated the word as the testicles of Seth.²¹⁶³ The fetus, as the image of Horus, would presumably not desire to cohabitate with a malevolent Sethian element, with this concept likely represented here by the

²¹⁵⁷ R. Germer, "Ancient Egyptian Pharmaceutical Plants and the Eastern Mediterranean" in *The healing past: Pharmaceuticals in the Biblical and Rabbinic World*, ed. Irene and Walter Jacob (Studies in Ancient Medicine 7; Leiden - New York - Köln, E.J. Brill, 1993), 70.

²¹⁵⁸ See Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian medicine*, 152-154 for list of agreed herbal materials.


²¹⁵⁹ Berlin 3038 spells 83, 163; Ebers 205, 208, 213, 663, 660 (= Hearst 117 + 118), 856, 858; Hearst 205. For full list of occurrences in medico-magical texts, see Germer, "Untersuchungen," 266.


²¹⁶⁰ Ex: R.O. Faulkner, *A concise dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 86; R. Hannig, *Großes Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch* (Mainz: Phillip von Zabern, 1995), 267; Strouhal et al, *Medicine of the ancient Egyptians*, 105, 126-127, 163.


²¹⁶¹ Germer, "Untersuchungen," 267; Westendorf, *Handbuch*, 498.

²¹⁶² Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 170.

²¹⁶³ Germer, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Heilpflanzen*, 68.

bddw-k3 plant preventing its growth in utero.²¹⁶⁴ In one mythical episode from Papyrus Jumilhac, Seth pursued Isis as a *k3*-bull and released semen in frustration.²¹⁶⁵ The etymology of the plant's name may have corresponded to the "Sethian poison" issued by the bull (*mw n k3*) and explain why the word had the determinative .²¹⁶⁶ The bitter juice of the *bddw-k3* plant would then have contrasted with the sweet milk assimilated to that of the goddess Isis, who fueled another "powerful bull".²¹⁶⁷

 (*n3z3z3*): The *n3z3z3*-plant occurred in birth spells Ebers 797, Ebers 804, and Ebers 806, which all seem to have tried to loosen the child. Juice of this plant appeared in a post-birth spell, Ebers 827, which belonged to a group of spells for cooling and contracting the womb. The plant was only mentioned in medical texts.²¹⁶⁸ It seems particularly associated with treating genital issues, since it was used either alone or with only juniper berries.²¹⁶⁹

 (*hpr-wr*): The identification of this plant, also called the plant of Wadi Natrun, is still unknown.²¹⁷⁰ Remarkably, almost all known treatments in which this ingredient occurred were genital and rectal tampons.²¹⁷¹

5.2.5.2 Female Body Parts

Egyptian terminology for parts of the body, particularly the genital region, did not tend to be as specific as in modern medical vocabulary.

²¹⁶⁴ Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 173.

²¹⁶⁵ J. Vandier, *Le papyrus Jumilhac* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1961), 114 and 148, note 59; Manniche, *An ancient Egyptian herbal*, 92; Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 174.

²¹⁶⁶ Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 174; Fukagawa, *Investigation into dynamics*, 38.

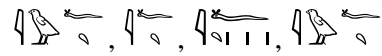
²¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁶⁸ Germer, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Heilpflanzen*, 81.

²¹⁶⁹ Germer, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Heilpflanzen*, 82.

²¹⁷⁰ Germer, "Untersuchungen," 293.


²¹⁷¹ Eber 140, 163, 818, 823; Kahun 25. Sole exception, for treatment of a blood vessel, Ebers 685.



(*iwf*): Conventionally meaning “flesh,” the term can also specify the womb.²¹⁷²



: This word for uterus, which some Egyptologists had read as *idt*²¹⁷³ and others as *hmt*,²¹⁷⁴ occurred in numerous gynecological descriptions, but only once in relation to childbearing.²¹⁷⁵ Consistent with the medical contexts in which the term was used, Griffith, in his study, convincingly had argued that the determinative was a representation of the bicornate uterus of a cow.²¹⁷⁶

In contrast to the straightforward significance of closing the womb, “opening” entails a variety of possible interpretations. Most frequently, the opening of the womb (or more generally “body”) was an expression of the act of giving birth.²¹⁷⁷ The term for “opening of the uterus” was called *r3 n hmt* ().²¹⁷⁸ Thus, in P. Westcar 5/11, when women were brought to amuse King Sneferu, the king demanded that they be virgins of shapely bodies “who have not been opened in childbirth.”²¹⁷⁹



(*mw.t rmt*): Scholars had often translated the term as “uterus” or “placenta.” The expression occurred in Papyrus Kahun spell 17, Papyrus BM spell 13, Papyrus Ramesseum spell C 17-24, Papyrus Leiden I 348 spell 30, and Ebers 789. Of those, the former two are too damaged to be useful in determining the meaning of the phrase. Some scholars had

²¹⁷² Wb. V, 51, 14-17; Hannig, *Äg. Wb.* I, 55-7.

²¹⁷³ Ex.: Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica* II, 259f.

²¹⁷⁴ Ex: *Grundriß* III, 2, 507-600.

²¹⁷⁵ Ghalioungui, *Magic and medical science*, 121; Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 67.

²¹⁷⁶ F. Ll. Griffith, “The hieroglyph of the bicornate uterus,” *Kêmi* 2 (1929): 83.

²¹⁷⁷ Ritner, “A uterine amulet,” 214; *Grundriß* I, 89 for *wp*, “to open.”

²¹⁷⁸ Grapow et al., *Grundriß* VII, 1, 513; Lefebvre, “Tableau des parties du corps,” 42.

²¹⁷⁹ Simpson, *The literature of ancient Egypt*, 20.

considered it to have been a less technical term for uterus.²¹⁸⁰ However, the evidence currently suggests that *mw.t rmt* could designate the placenta or uterus.

Of the spells, Papyrus Ramesseum IV C 17-24 is a spell for protecting a child "on the day of its birth," and it is probably the clearest evidence of *mw.t rmt* meaning placenta. This test of the survival of the child specifically mixed *mw.t rmt* with milk, which was given to the child over three days. Logically, the infant would not be eating the uterus, but rather the placenta.²¹⁸¹

Papyrus Ebers spell 453 discussed a drug in a mixture of four substances, which were burnt and should be given on the head of the patient as a prophylactic against *skm*-illness (perhaps hair loss).²¹⁸² In addition to eggs of *g3bgw*-bird, *mrh.t* oil, and *ibr*-ointment, the spell also mentioned *mw.t rmt* "of a cat." Given the sacred nature of cats in Egyptian religion, the old translation of "uterus of cat", which would involve killing the cat, would not make sense. To von Deines, the active ingredients of the spell were the *mw.t rmt* of a cat and the bird's egg, which may indicate that the spell used sympathetic magic to rejuvenate people by using the components from the infancy stage in the womb of animals.²¹⁸³

Spell 30 of Papyrus Leiden I 348 occurred in a series of spells from this papyrus for speeding up childbirth.²¹⁸⁴ Part of the spell specifically stated, "Come down, *mw.t rmt*, come down!"²¹⁸⁵ Though Borghouts had considered both womb and placenta as possible translations,²¹⁸⁶ the context of this spell indicates that it is the placenta.

²¹⁸⁰ *Grundriß* VII, 1, 364, citing Ebers 789; Lefebvre, "Tableau des parties du corps," 41; Weeks, *Anatomical knowledge*, 67.

²¹⁸¹ Feucht, "Das Weg in der Leben," 50 and n.97.

²¹⁸² W. Wreszinski, *Der Papyrus Ebers*, 65, 10-12.

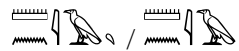
²¹⁸³ Von Deines, "Mutter der Menschen," 32.

²¹⁸⁴ See below, § 5.2.4.3 for discussion.

²¹⁸⁵ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 29.

²¹⁸⁶ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 148, note 352.

Scholars who had believed that that *mw.t rmt* meant the uterus frequently cited the title of Ebers 789 as support: "Prescription for making *mw.t rmt* of a woman return to its proper place."²¹⁸⁷ Spells 790-794 were additional treatments for the same issue. Notably, Ebers 795 had the same heading with respect to the *hm.t* uterus: "another (treatment) of causing that the *hm.t*-uterus goes to its place."²¹⁸⁸ In von Deines' explanation of the text, the phrase - "to the right place" - would have referred to Egyptians viewing the correct place of the placenta as in the womb,²¹⁸⁹ but it seems rather speculative. From the treatment of the placenta, such as the placenta burials from the Deir el-Medina Eastern Necropolis,²¹⁹⁰ the "right place" of the placenta for Egyptians was clearly outside the womb. Given the heading for Ebers 795, it makes much more sense for Ebers 789-794 to have referred to treating the uterus.



(*mni3*): While some scholars had translated the term as the fundus of the uterus,²¹⁹¹ others had interpreted it as the shoulders or pulse.²¹⁹² The observation of the resistance of the woman's forearm in Papyrus Berlin 3038 spell 197 suggests that the latter two interpretations are most likely.



(*h*): This term was the conventional word for placenta.²¹⁹³



(*hp3w*): It seems possible that Egyptians did not distinguish terminology between "navel" and "umbilical cord,"²¹⁹⁴ but referred to both with this term.²¹⁹⁵ For example,

²¹⁸⁷ Wreszinski, *Der Papyrus Ebers*, 93, 18-19.

²¹⁸⁸ Wreszinski, *Der Papyrus Ebers*, 94, 7-8.

²¹⁸⁹ Deines, "Mutter der Menschen," 35-6.

²¹⁹⁰ Bruyère, *Rapport 15*, 11.

²¹⁹¹ Feucht, *Das Kind*, 99.

²¹⁹² J. Richard-Alain and A.-M. Loyrette, "A propos des textes médicaux des Papyrus Ramesseum nos III et IV. La gynécologie," 367; Strouhal and Vymazalová, "Mother and child care," 111-112, 162-163.

²¹⁹³ Weeks, *The anatomical knowledge*, 68.

²¹⁹⁴ Weeks, *The anatomical knowledge*, 54.

²¹⁹⁵ *Wb* III, 356-357.

Gardiner had translated Papyrus Westcar 10, 11-12 "They washed him after his navel-string had been cut."²¹⁹⁶

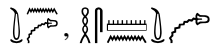


(*h.t*): The usual word to designate the situation of the developing child or the place whence it comes is the term *h.t*, equivalent to our word for 'belly'.²¹⁹⁷ This general term likely referred to the abdominal region and not to any specific organ,²¹⁹⁸ so proposed translations vary from "stomach" to "uterus". In Papyrus Westcar, Dedi referred to "the eldest of the three children who are in the *h.t* of Rudjedet,"²¹⁹⁹ which allows one the choice of translating *h.t* as "womb."²²⁰⁰



(*kns*): This word from Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom medical-magical spells seemed to have been a more general term referring to the lower part of the abdomen, rather than "vagina" as some have translated.²²⁰¹ Berlin 3027, spell U placed this term in a list of body parts between the terms for navel and phallus.²²⁰²

5.2.5.3 Conditions



(*hsmn*): The term for "purification" in Egyptian, *hsmn*, occurred in New Kingdom medico-magical texts and documents from Deir el-Medina, as well as in Demotic sources.²²⁰³ For menstruation, which Egyptians mythically identified with the Nile flood,²²⁰⁴ the

²¹⁹⁶ A. Gardiner, "𓂏𓂛𓂏𓂛𓂏𓂛 = 'umbilical cord'," ZÄS 66 (1930): 71.

²¹⁹⁷ Grundriß VII.2, 673-680.

²¹⁹⁸ Weeks, *The anatomical knowledge*, 53.

²¹⁹⁹ Lines 9, 7-8. For translation, ex. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature I*, 219.




²²⁰⁰ Weeks, *The anatomical knowledge*, 53-54.

²²⁰¹ W.R. Dawson, "Three anatomical terms," ZÄS 62 (1927): 22; Grundriß VII.2, 907-8; Lefebvre, "Tableau des parties du corps," 38-9; discussed by Barns, *Five Ramesseum Papyri*, 25.


²²⁰² Yamazacki, *Papyrus Berlin 3027*, Rs. 4,7.

²²⁰³ There is also a Middle Kingdom mention of a loincloth of a woman *m hsmn* in the Instruction of Khety (Wilfong, "Menstrual synchrony," 422.).

²²⁰⁴ Westendorf, "Beiträge," 146. See also Borghouts, *Ancient Medical Texts*, 24, nos. 31 and 33.

ancient Egyptian term was *ḥsmn*.²²⁰⁵ Egyptian writers typically used  as a determinative or unilateral, which appeared in words pertaining to bodily liquids like spit or blood, as well as *ḥ* "to spew out."²²⁰⁶ Writings of *ḥsmn* also include the sign , which determined words such as *ḥm/zḥm* "pound" as well as *ḥmꜣt* "salt" and *ḥsmn* "natron".²²⁰⁷ While the former sign referred to *ḥsmn* as a bodily liquid, the latter might have indicated that the "purification" involved using natron and/or salt to cleanse the body.²²⁰⁸ As we will see below, there are even two occurrences of  as determinatives, which was more typical when *ḥsmn* meant "salt."²²⁰⁹

Debate exists about whether the term referred to menstruation, post-birth purification, or to both, or possibly also to miscarriage and abortion. Unfortunately, the writings of the word do not seem to provide any clues to help answer this question. If *ḥsmn* included post-partum isolation in at least some cases, texts with this term could shed light on rituals accompanying birth. Before discussion of interpretations of this term, it is necessary to examine the context in which *ḥsmn* occurred.

From the New Kingdom magical-medical texts, it makes the most sense to translate *ḥsmn* as "menstruation."²²¹⁰ For example, Ebers 833²²¹¹ discussed the case of "a woman who has spent many years without her menstruation (*ḥsmn*, ) coming." A diagnosis from the Edwin Smith Papyrus,²²¹² however, stated that a blockage of blood in the uterus explains a patient's

²²⁰⁵ Wb II, 163; Von Deines et al., *Wörterbuch der medizinische Texte*, II, 635.

²²⁰⁶ A. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar* (Oxford, Griffith Institute, 1957), D 26, p. 453.

²²⁰⁷ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 453 and U 32, p. 520; Hannig, *Großes Handwörterbuch*, 562.


²²⁰⁸ On natron as a cleaning agent, see J.M. Filer, "Hygiene," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford University Press, 2001), <http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2368/view/10.1093/acref/9780195102345.001.0001/acref-9780195102345-e-0327>.

²²⁰⁹ Faulkner, *Middle Egyptian*, 178; Hannig, *Großes Handwörterbuch*, 562.



²²¹⁰ P. Frandsen, "The menstrual 'taboo' in ancient Egypt." *JNES* 65.2 (2007): 82-84; Wilfong "Menstrual synchrony," 422.



²²¹¹ 97, 1-4: Frandsen, "The menstrual 'taboo'," 82.



²²¹² Vs. 20, 13-15: Frandsen, "The menstrual 'taboo'," 82.

stomach pain "while *ḥsmn* does not come for her." Probably the clearest example is Ebers 832,²²¹³ which treated irregular *ḥsmn* by the following: "When it (the *ḥsmn*, ) has started, you shall make for her: smashed garlic, cider and sawdust of fir tree. Her pubic region is to be bandaged with it."

Mentions of *ḥsmn* are most numerous occur in various texts from Deir el-Medina, such as necropolis journals, lists of goods, and letters. Scholars had based their theories of the definition of this term primarily on these particular texts.

O. BM 5634 ( in rto. 4, 7, 10 and vso. 3, 4, 7, 9, 17;  in vso. 9):²²¹⁴ This large necropolis journal, dating to Year 40 of Rameses II, listed forty workmen with a name followed by dates when they were absent, covering 280 days. Above most of the dates appears a text in red specifying the reason, including ten entries where the causes for absences were due to the *ḥsmn* of a workman's daughter (rto. 4, 7; vso. 4, 17), or a workman's wife (rto. 10; vso. 3, 4, 7, 9). This text was probably compiled from day-to-day notes.²²¹⁵

O. Gardiner 167:²²¹⁶ The journal recorded one instance (rto. 8, , ) where a workman missed work due to "his wife having *ḥsmn*." It is unclear from which reign in the New Kingdom this text dates.

O. CGC 25782 ( in vso. 18-24, ):²²¹⁷ This daybook dates to the third year of Amenmesse and is from the Valley of the Kings. It covered thirty days, seventeen of which were

²²¹³ 96, 20-97, 1: Frandsen, "The menstrual 'taboo'," 82-83.

²²¹⁴ J. Černý and A. Gardiner, *Hieratic Ostraca*, v.1 (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1957), pls. 83-4; *KRI* 3, pp. 515-525.

²²¹⁵ Frandsen, "the menstrual 'taboo'," 90.

²²¹⁶ *KRI* 7, p. 242.

²²¹⁷ J. Černý, *Ostraca hiératiques*, v.1 (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1930), 103 (recto), pl. CIII; *KRI* 4, 221 (line 5) to 225 (line 16).

work days. Absences appeared written in black ink within the rest of the text, which causes confusion about whether a reason for absence was meant for one or more absences.²²¹⁸ Absences due to *ḥsmn* occurred in seven instances: vso. 18 (two absences), vso. 19 (two absences), vso. 20, vso. 21, and vso. 23.

O. MMA 14.6.217 (↵):²²¹⁹ This text recorded the accession of Sety II in its first entry. Since the verso is fragmentary, it is unclear how many days this text covered. Two instances of absences due to *ḥsmn* occurred, one for a wife (rto. 7), and one possibly for a daughter (vso. 6-7).

O. Turin 57388:²²²⁰ Dating sometime at the end of the Nineteenth Dynasty, this record covered II Peret [9(?)] to [2]4. One of the entries for Day 13 recorded that the workman Any was off duty due to the *ḥsmn* (↵) of his wife.

No workman was recorded as absent due to the *ḥsmn* of his mother or his sister.²²²¹ To some scholars, this pattern means that men were involved in these situations only when it concerned their spouses or daughters,²²²² but not when it affected other female members of their family.²²²³ Frandsen, however, had posited that, by the time the workmen would gain full membership on the crew, any sisters would likely have married, and that suggestion may explain the lack of sisters mentioned in these records.²²²⁴ However, that theory had assumed that the

²²¹⁸ Frandsen, "The menstrual 'taboo'," 91.

²²¹⁹ Cerny and Gardiner, *Hieratic Ostraca*, v. 1, pl. 64, 1; *KRI* 4, 298 (line 7) to 299 (line 11).

²²²⁰ J. López, *Ostraca ieratici*, Catalogo del Museo Egizio di Torino Serie Secunda, Collezioni 3 (Turin: Museo Egizio di Torino, 1975), v. 3 = *KRI* 7, 255 (line 11) to 258 (line 7).

²²²¹ J. Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina: A study of the status and roles of the female inhabitants in the workmen's community during the Ramesside Period* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut Voor Het Nabije Oosten, 2001), 164.


²²²² Jac. J. Janssen, "Absence from work by the necropolis workmen of Thebes," *SAK* 8 (1980): 141-3.

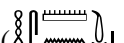
²²²³ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 164.

²²²⁴ Frandsen, "The menstrual 'taboo'," 95.

villagers had children close in age, which ignores the possibility of step-sisters. Likewise, scholars had estimated breastfeeding lasted three years,²²²⁵ resulting in a spacing of births. Given that these records only recorded *ḥsmn* when it affected the workmen's attendance, the question of whether males in the community dealt with the *ḥsmn* of sisters and/or mothers remains unclear.

Other text references made mention of *iw/īy m ḥsmn*, "coming in menstruation/purification," such as:

O. DM 230:²²²⁶ This text, dated to Ramses II, listed festival provisions. In line 3, the text stated: *p3 īy m ḥsmn n s3t=f Nfrw(t)*, "The coming in *ḥsmn* () of his daughter Nofru."²²²⁷

O. Brussels 6311:²²²⁸ The document discussed a transfer, or a property arrangement/inventory of items with various persons.²²²⁹ On the recto of the text, the scribe made an addition was to the left of the first text column, including (rto. II, 4-6): *p3 ḥmty r in p3y=f nṯr ḥr nty t3y ḥmt n Nh(t)-mnw p3y=f šri īy m ḥsmn* () "the coppersmith will bring his god, because this wife of *Nh(t)-mnw*, his son, comes in *ḥsmn/ḥsmn*'ing."²²³⁰ Frandsen had thought that the writing of this word may indicate a different meaning: "natron."²²³¹

O. OIC 9 (= OIM N. 160 and O. OIM 19208): This unpublished text mentioned that a man again brought (something) to the woman *T3-wr(t)-ḥtp.ti (l.2) m-di iw=s m ḥsmn*, "because

²²²⁵ For example, Janssen and Janssen, *Growing up in ancient Egypt*, 19; Robins, *Women in ancient Egypt*, 87-8.

²²²⁶ Černý, *Ostraca hiératiques non littéraires de Deir el Médineh*, v.3, pl. 18 = *KRI* 3, 559, lines 8-9.

²²²⁷ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 164.


²²²⁸ Schafik Allam, *Hieratische Ostraka und Papyri aus der Ramessidenzeit*, v.1 (Tübingen: Selbstverlag des Herausgebers, 1973), 53-54; Allam, *Hieratische Ostraka*, v.2, 24-5; *KRI* 4, 230-1.

²²²⁹ Jac J. Janssen, *Commodity Prices from the Ramesside Period. An economic study of the village necropolis workmen at Thebes* (Leiden: Brill 1975), 293.

²²³⁰ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 165.

²²³¹ Frandsen, "The menstrual 'taboo'," 96.

she came *ḥsmn*'ing."²²³² Toivari-Viitala had provided only the translation and transliteration of the two most complete lines of the four-line text.

O. OIM 13512:²²³³ This recently translated ostrakon dates likely to Merenptah. It read:
 (1) *ḥt-sp* 9 4 *ḥt* 13 *hrw n pry ir.n tzy* 8 *ḥm.wt r-b[nr r/m]* (2) [*tz*] *st ḥm.wt iw.w m ḥsmn.t*
iw=w ḥr ph r-šzḥ ph(wy) n pr [n]tt [...] (3) [...] *pz 3 inb*, "Year 9, fourth month of the season of
 Inundation, day 13: The day when these eight women came out [to/from (2) the] place of women
 while they were *ḥsmn*'ing ()²²³⁴ They got as far as the rear of the house which
 [...(3)...] the three walls."

The Demotic sources of *ḥsmn* include Setne I (Demotic Papyrus Cairo 30646),²²³⁵ a literary text, and Hellenistic housing contracts.²²³⁶ In the former, the woman narrated becoming pregnant soon after her marriage as, "When my time of *ḥsmn* came, I made no more *ḥsmn*." The Greek and Demotic housing contracts mentioned areas where menstruating women can go, which can be in front of the temple, a place in a group of houses, or under the staircase.²²³⁷

Janssen had considered the term *ḥsmn* not to mean "menstruation," but instead referred to post-childbirth purification, since the number of times this word appeared is lower than would be normal.²²³⁸ The number of attested written references to *ḥsmn*, if signifying exclusively

²²³² Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 165.

²²³³ Wilfong, "Menstrual synchrony," 419-434.

²²³⁴ Wilfong, "Menstrual synchrony," 420 translated the term as "menstruating."

²²³⁵ Setne I, p. 3, lines 5-7. Translation in F. Ll. Griffith, *Stories of the High Priests of Memphis: The Sethon of Herodotus and the Demotic tales of Khamuas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 89; M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, v.3 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 128.

²²³⁶ F. Colin, "Un espace reserve aux femmes dans l'habitat de l'Egypte hellénistique d'après des papyrus grec et démotiques," in *Atti del XXII Congresso Internazionale di papirologia: Firenze, 23-29 agosto 1998*, v.1, ed. Isabella Andorlini et al. (Firenze: Istituto papirologico G. Vitelli, 2001), 259-268; K.-Th. Zauzich, *Die ägyptische Schreibertradition in Aufbau, Sprache und Schrift der demotischen Kaufverträge aus ptolomäischer Zeit*, ÄA 19 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1968), 17ff. (Urkunden 11), 21ff. (Urkunden 14), 25ff. (Urkunden 15).

²²³⁷ Colin, "Un espace réserve," 259-268.

²²³⁸ Janssen, "Absence from work," 141-3.

(ordinary) menstruation, should be higher.²²³⁹ Thus, Janssen²²⁴⁰ had challenged the narrow definition of the term *ḥsmn* as signifying only "ordinary" menstruation, and had drawn attention to the polyvalent meaning of the word which also comprised the concept of "purification." For the latter meaning, Janssen had attempted to connect it to the ritual of purification after childbirth, and further had argued that a miscarriage may also have required a similar ritual cleansing.²²⁴¹ He had based conclusions primarily on the otherwise very few mentions of birth from these necropolis journals; none occurred in O. BM 5634.²²⁴² According to Janssen the *ḥsmn* entries would all represent absences due to purification rites in connection with childbirth.

Wilfong and Frandsen, however, had argued against this theory. To both,²²⁴³ Ebers 832 and the Edwin Smith papyrus, as well as Setne I and the Demotic contracts contradict this interpretation. In this understanding, the absences probably were cases when the menstruation disrupted the household, such as women going to the "place of women" or the women being in pain.²²⁴⁴ Wilfong had also argued that OIM 13512 is evidence of menstrual synchrony occurring in the village, and he had made a similar case for the necropolis journals.²²⁴⁵ As for the "place of women," a number of huts and small buildings may qualify as candidates for this location.²²⁴⁶ Some scholars had also raised doubts that women would take their babies with them and congregate somewhere outside the village.²²⁴⁷ Text O. Michaelides 48, a list of various goods intended for feasts, mentioned among its entries (rto. II, 1) *pꜣ swꜥb n tꜣy=f šr[īt ...]*, the

²²³⁹ Janssen, "Absence from work," 141. This observation was also acknowledged by Wilfong, "Menstrual synchrony," 424; Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 163.

²²⁴⁰ Janssen, "Absence from work," 141-3.

²²⁴¹ Janssen, "Absence from work," 142-3.

²²⁴² Janssen, "Absence from work," 142.

²²⁴³ Frandsen, "The menstrual 'taboo' in ancient Egypt," 83; Wilfong, "Menstrual synchrony," 423-4.

²²⁴⁴ Wilfong, "Menstrual synchrony," 424.

²²⁴⁵ Wilfong, "Menstrual synchrony," 425-426 and Fig. 40.2.

²²⁴⁶ D. Valbelle, *"Les ouvriers de la tombe": Deir el-Médineh à l'époque Ramesside*, Bibliothèque d'étude 96 (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1985), 253-4.

²²⁴⁷ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 168.

purification of his daught[er ...].²²⁴⁸ Though dating much earlier and from a different context, Papyrus Westcar similarly discussed Rudjedet's post-partum purification as *w^cb.n.s.*, not using the term *ḥsmn*.²²⁴⁹ From these texts, Wilfong had reasoned that that *ḥsmn* did not embody meanings of purification, as *sw^cb* and *w^cb* were the terms designating the latter.²²⁵⁰

Part of the disagreement on the meaning of *ḥsmn* centered on two entries from O. BM 5634 for one woman, the wife of *S3-mwt*, and they dated within three months of each other, I *pṛt* 25 and IV *pṛt* 23. Also notable is that, on the second date, IV *pṛt* 23 (Vso. 9), a daughter of a *W3d-ms* (rto. 7) also had *ḥsmn*. Janssen had suggested that the woman in question was one and the same in both cases, with this second case a miscarriage, while the *ḥsmn* for I *pṛt* 25 was a birth.²²⁵¹ Wilfong, in contrast, had considered the time between both references as too short for a birth followed by a miscarriage, and also had noted a lack of evidence for a purification following miscarriage.²²⁵² *S3-mwt* also missed work on I *pṛt* 18 due to the *ḥsmn* of his wife, whereas no similar absence was noted for *W3d-ms*.²²⁵³ Thus, it would appear either that *S3-mwt* had two different wives, or that the meaning of *ḥsmn* might have differed in the two entries of I *pṛt* 18 and IV *pṛt* 23.²²⁵⁴ Additionally, the daughter of *W3d-ms* was not necessarily identical with the wife of *S3-mwt*.²²⁵⁵ In another passage (vso. 4) of the same text, workman *Nfr-ḥbt* missed work both in the case of his daughter's *ḥsmn* (IV *ḥt* 13) as well as in that of his wife (IV *šmw* 26). It is just not clear, however, what the age difference between mother and daughter would have been to draw any firm conclusions from that passage.²²⁵⁶

²²⁴⁸ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 166.

²²⁴⁹ Pap. Westcar 11, 18-19; A.M. Blackman, *The Story of king Kheops and the magicians, transcribed from Papyrus Westcar (Berlin Papyrus 3033)* (Reading: J.V. Books, 1988), 15.

²²⁵⁰ Wilfong, 'Menstrual synchrony,' 423.

²²⁵¹ Janssen, 'Absence from work,' 143.

²²⁵² Wilfong, 'Menstrual synchrony,' 424-5.

²²⁵³ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 166.

²²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²²⁵⁶ Ibid.

Toivari-Viitala had argued that, in addition to the word *ḥsmn* as a designation for both menstruation and post-parturition purification, the term could also apply to miscarriage and abortion.²²⁵⁷ For the latter, she had claimed that it could literally be considered as a purification of something unwanted,²²⁵⁸ though there is no evidence for this assertion. As for Wilfong's argument from O. Michaelides 48 and Papyrus Westcar, it is entirely possible that different terms can describe the one and the same event. Toivari-Viitala had cited P. DM 27 where sexual intercourse was referred to both as (rto. 6-7) *šdm irm*, and (rto. 12) as *nk*.²²⁵⁹ Likewise, one could also point to the interchangeable use of the terms *ḥm(t)* and *bʕk(t)* for servants.²²⁶⁰ Thus, Toivari-Viitala had been inclined to favor the opinion whereby *ḥsmn* and *swʕb* might have been used as designations for similar types of events.²²⁶¹

If one looks at all the references, a picture emerges of women going to/from a specific place upon the occurrence of *ḥsmn*, and men staying away from work when their wives and daughters were *ḥsmn*'ing.²²⁶² In O. Brussels E. 6311, the father-in-law appears to have been involved as well. Moreover, references to this event came from a variety of contexts, including official documentation. In one of the cases, O. OIC 9, *ḥsmn* resulted in the women receiving goods, as discussed above.²²⁶³ Also, the *ḥsmn* seemed to have occurred in a specific location.²²⁶⁴ Toivari-Viitala's theory that *ḥsmn* had multiple meanings is the most compelling, best fitting the

²²⁵⁷ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 164.

²²⁵⁸ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 164, 168.

²²⁵⁹ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 167.

²²⁶⁰ B.G. Davies and J. Toivari, "Misuse of a maidservant's services at Deir el-Medina," *SAK* 24 (1997): 72-73, note f, with further references.

²²⁶¹ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 167.

²²⁶² Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 165.

²²⁶³ Ibid.

²²⁶⁴ Ibid.

available evidence. As seen above,²²⁶⁵ other terms in the medical/magical texts also seemed to have lacked the technical specificity generally assumed in modern day practice.



²²⁶⁶ Representing the sole occurrence of *g3.t*, spell 6 of the Kahun Gynecological Papyrus treated *g3.t nt idt* “*g3.t* of the uterus,” with symptoms of pain in the limbs and eye-sockets. The diagnosis stated this *g3.t* originated from a “fresh birth.” Usage of the related term *g3w* indicates a general definition of “constriction, lack, deprivation.” From the Pyramid Texts, Nut ensured that the deceased “did not lack” *n g3w*, indicating that Egyptians viewed death as a state of want.²²⁶⁷ In a scene from the Old Kingdom tomb of Akhethetep,²²⁶⁸ a man assisting a cow giving birth stated, “it is not going to *g3w*,” which likely meant the cow would loosen the calf out, as opposed to constricting its uterus. A fragment from Papyrus Ramesseum III read, without any preserved context, *rdit g3w* “cause to lack.”²²⁶⁹ Rodabaugh had thought the spell probably meant to prevent *g3w*, so likely originally read (*tm*) *rdit g3w* “to cause (not) to lack.” The general meaning of *g3w* thus indicated that *g3.t* involved narrowing of the uterus, possibly as a result of a nutritional issue. To Westendorf, this narrowing of the uterus may have been connected with or aggravated by drinking beer, hence the part of the spell specifying not drinking beer.²²⁷⁰ This situation could thus explain the prescription of a beer substitute involving mashed bread mixed with water.

²²⁶⁵ See § 5.2.5.2.

²²⁶⁶ The following analysis is in large part thanks to personal communication with Rachel Rodabaugh on March 23, 2016.

²²⁶⁷ Nils Billing, *Nut. The Goddess in Text and Iconography* (Uppsala: USE 5, 2002), 93-96, citing PT spells 447, 450, and 451.

²²⁶⁸ N. de Garis Davies, *The Mastaba of Ptahhetep and Akhethetep at Saqqareh, Part II: The Mastaba. The Sculptures of Akhethetep* (ASE 9; London: EEF, 1901), 15, pl. XIII (top register).

²²⁶⁹ Fragment 8, 2: Barns, *Five Ramesseum Papyri*, pl. 14.

²²⁷⁰ Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin*, 414.

𓄠𓄡𓄢, 𓄠𓄡𓄢, 𓄠𓄡𓄢 (gsw): Ebers 808 and 809 both treated gsw, which most

scholars had not translated.²²⁷¹ Several theories abound on the interpretation of gsw, including abortion, "obstruction,"²²⁷² and overflowing of breastmilk.²²⁷³ Given that headings starting with "another of" didn't always mean a spell treated the same condition of a previous passage, the heading for Ebers 810, "Another prescription of the breasts when they are ill," does not prove that Ebers 808-809 treated the breasts.²²⁷⁴ Far more convincing is the word *bn.tj*, "nipples," indicating that these spells involved treating overflowing breasts.²²⁷⁵

5.2.6 Concluding remarks

The medical/magical texts examined exhibit remarkable continuity. Changes tended to be subtle, involving loosening restrictions on the relations between people and deities, and expansions on previous religious concepts. Berlin 3027, with more explicit mention of deities than other Middle Kingdom medical/magical texts, appears to have been a transition between Middle Kingdom medical/magical texts and those of the New Kingdom. A number of the spells, both from the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom, were based on the model of Isis as the mother and the child as Horus against a Sethian threat. Likewise, Hathor featured prominently in the birth spells and post-birth survival spells.

Asiatics and Nubians occurred in fertility spells Berlin 3038 spell 198 and Carlsberg VIII spell 6 from the New Kingdom, as well as Berlin 3027 spell D from the Middle Kingdom. An Asiatic woman was also invoked as an enemy in Berlin 3027 spell E against *nšw*. In all those spells, Egyptians viewed these foreigners as a threat, particularly the Asiatic and Nubian women

²²⁷¹ Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian medicine*, 197; Bardinot, *Les papyrus médicaux*, 447.

²²⁷² Richard-Alain and Loyrette, *La Mere*, 325.

²²⁷³ Strouhal and Vymazalová, "Mother and child care," 184.

²²⁷⁴ This is in contrast to von Deines, "Die Rezepte Eb 808 und 809," 17.

²²⁷⁵ Deines, "Die Rezepte Eb 808 und 809," 17.

from Berlin 3027. While Baines had considered foreigners as perceived outside the created world,²²⁷⁶ the Execration Texts, such those from Giza shows that the execration figurines can include Egyptians as well as foreigners.²²⁷⁷ The formula of a figure found by Abu Bakir shows the execration only effective in cases of rebellion.²²⁷⁸ While the concept of foreigners as enemies was thus not universal in Egyptian culture, the dynamic of foreigners and rebellious Egyptians being foes likewise occurred in the apotropaia.²²⁷⁹

In addition to the role of deities and certain foes, the medical/magical texts featured some continuity in terms of the objects they used. Birth bricks, whether directly mentioned,²²⁸⁰ implied via the repetition of incantations four times,²²⁸¹ or implied via four knots,²²⁸² occurred in a number of Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom spells. Knot amulets likewise appeared in medical/magical texts of various dates,²²⁸³ as well as acacia.²²⁸⁴ While specific mentions of figurines of Bes in the texts date only to the New Kingdom,²²⁸⁵ objects depicting Aha/Bes date from the Middle Kingdom on.²²⁸⁶

Pleas for the deceased to aid in fertility and birth featured similar continuity to the medical/magical texts. The deceased appeared frequently as an enemy of the infant in the

²²⁷⁶ J. Baines, "Contextualizing Egyptian representations of society and ethnicity," in *Study of the Ancient Near East in 21st Dynasty*, ed. J.S. Cooper and G. M. Schwartz (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 339-384, esp. 360.

²²⁷⁷ Y. Koenig, "The image of the foreigner in ancient Egyptian magical texts," in *Moving Across Borders: Foreign relations, religion, and cultural interactions in the ancient Mediterranean*, ed. P. Kousoulis and K. Magliveras (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters and Epartment of Oriental Studies, 2007), 223-224; A.M Abu Bakir and J. Osing, "Ächtungstexte aus dem Alten Reich," *MDAIK* 29 (1974): 97-133, pl. 31-86; J. Osing, "Ächtungstexte aus dem Alten Reich (2)," *MDAIK* 32 (1976): 133-85, pl. 40-49.

²²⁷⁸ Koenig, "The image of the foreigner," 224; Osing, "Ächtungstexte aus dem Alten Reich (2)," 153-154.

²²⁷⁹ See below, § 6.3.3.1.

²²⁸⁰ Berlin 3027 spells D and F; Leiden I 348 spell 33.

²²⁸¹ Berlin 3027 spell V; Leiden I 348 spell 30.

²²⁸² See above in § 5.2.4.4.1.

²²⁸³ See above in § 5.2.4.4.1.

²²⁸⁴ See above in § 5.2.4.4.1.

²²⁸⁵ Leiden I 348 spells 30-1.

²²⁸⁶ See above, § 2.3.

medical/magical texts. In contrast, the pleas requested assistance from the deceased family members of petitioners. Both genres featured Hathor in her birth-goddess role. While the spells mentioned objects, many of the pleas occurred on items such as nude female figurines.

5.3 Pleas to the dead

There is some uncertainty about whether Egyptians viewed the deceased as an intermediary for a childbirth or himself engendered the requested child, as it may be implied in Ramesseum IV C 20-24.²²⁸⁷ Some of the Letters to the Dead, dating from the late 3rd to early 2nd Millennium, as well as a Middle Kingdom copy of the Coffin Texts, requested the deceased for a successful pregnancy and childbirth. In at least three cases, these texts occurred on figurines of a nude woman holding a child, presumably from grave offerings. Some scholars had asserted that the deceased in these communications acted as a mediator with deities, as opposed to actually engendering the hoped-for child.²²⁸⁸

The earliest such request occurred on a First Intermediate Period letter on Oriental Institute E 13945, a jar stand without a bottom. The inscription consists of a son writing to his father asking for a child for himself and one for the father's daughter, "Let a healthy son be born for me (and) it is for your daughter that I'm begging a second healthy son."²²⁸⁹ There is some uncertainty whether this daughter was the same as the wife of the "son" (meaning son-in-law)²²⁹⁰ or a sister of said son.²²⁹¹

²²⁸⁷ See in § 5.2.4.2.

²²⁸⁸ For example, Fischer-Elfert, "Kindheit im alten Ägypter," 23.

²²⁸⁹ B. Brier, *Ancient Egyptian Magic* (New York: 1980), 202; H. El-Leithy, "Letters to the Dead in ancient and modern Egypt," in *Egyptology at the dawn of the twenty-first century: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists Cairo, 2000*, Vol. 1, ed. Zahi Hawass (Cairo; New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2003), 306; A. Gardiner, "A new letter to the dead," *JEA* 16 (1930): 19-22; #13945; J. Janak, *JNES* 62/4 (2003): 275-276; Wente, *Letters from ancient Egypt*, 213-4, #345.

²²⁹⁰ Janak, 276; Roeder, *Der Ausklang*, 272.

²²⁹¹ El-Leithy, "Letters to the Dead," 306; Gardiner, "A new letter to the dead," 19-22, same as #345 in Wente, *Letters from ancient Egypt*, 213-4.



Figure 220 (left) – Berlin 14517. Image from Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, fig. 18.
Figure 221 (right) – Louvre E 8000. Image from Desroches-Noblecourt, “Concubines du mort,” pl. 4.

All the statuettes with inscriptions to the deceased date to the First Intermediate Period and Middle Kingdom.²²⁹² Statuette Berlin 14517 (Figure 220), depicting a woman carrying a child on her left hip, has an inscription on her right side of the same vein, “May a birth be given on to thy daughter Šh.”²²⁹³ The mutilation of the two bird hieroglyphs of the inscription shows that the figure was designed for placement in the grave of the father of Ah.²²⁹⁴ A second such figurine, Louvre E8000 (Figure 221),²²⁹⁵ read: “A boon which the king gives to the *k3* of Khonsu: a birth for Tita.” Along the same vein, a New Kingdom block statue fragment from the Temple of Mentuhotep in Deir el-Bahari (London BM 41645),²²⁹⁶ belonging to a servant of Hathor the Golden One, has a text on the knees specifying that women can pray to it for a child:

²²⁹² Hansen, “Motherhood,” 180.

²²⁹³ Gardiner, “A new letter to the dead,” pl. 21, pl. 4; Siegfried Schott, “Die Bitte und ein Kind auf einer Grabfigur des frühen Mittleren Reiches,” *JEA* 16 (1930): 23.

²²⁹⁴ Schott, “Die Bitte und ein Kind,” 23.

²²⁹⁵ Desroches Noblecourt, “Concubines du Mort,” 37-9, pls. IV-V; Tooley, “Middle Kingdom Burial Customs,” 339, pl. 95:2.

²²⁹⁶ E. Naville and H.R. Hall, *The XIth Dynasty temple at Deir el Bahari* III, 8, pl. 9b.

I [...] her son Watjwatj [...] (2) [...] all people who enter the temple of the Golden One, fill my mouth with what you give, give [...] (3) [...] her is, who is satisfied. I am an is and I speak to the Golden One [...] (4) [...] you say. O people of Thebes, noble ladies as well as poor girls, all women who come at (any) time to Djeseret [...] (5) [...] to speak your petitions to the Cow of Gold, the Lady of Good Lifetime, the Mistress of the Shaven Priests (?), the Lady [...] (6) [...] chamber, door-keeper, that she may give you a good child (of) this house, happiness, and a good husband, bringing (?) [...] (7) [...] she rest (her) feet (?). If (you) give to him offerings in his presence, she will not be angry [...].²²⁹⁷

The Letters to the Dead requesting a child do not appear to have been isolated cases.

During the second half of the Middle Kingdom, certain personal names reflected similar supplications for children.²²⁹⁸ One group of names implied a requested child, such as *ꜣbt.n.i* “the one I desired.”²²⁹⁹ Another group referred to the child as “for” someone, such as *sꜣt-n-mwt.f* “a girl for her (his) mother.”²³⁰⁰ A combination of these groups occurs in a stele from Rio di Janeiro, with *dbḥ.n.(i)-tꜣy-n-mwt.f* “A boy I asked for his mother.”²³⁰¹ A third group were compounds with *ꜣꜣ(ꜣꜣ)ꜣꜣ* or *ꜣꜣ(ꜣꜣ)ꜣ*, *Nḥ(y)/Nḥ(y)t* “desired,” such as *Nḥy-snbi* “desired healthy.”²³⁰²

A similar theme occurred in funerary literature. In a copy of the Coffin Texts, Papyrus Berlin 10482, presumably from Asyut, the third part of the dedication included a request for the deceased to intervene with the gods to provide the petitioner a child. It dates to the early 12th Dynasty, based on paleography.²³⁰³ A misinterpretation of a word by Grapow meant that earlier scholars did not recognize the situation of this portion of the text.²³⁰⁴ The passage reads: “May you ask that they cause children to be born who are alive, safe and sound on earth and who will

²²⁹⁷ Pinch, *Votive offerings to Hathor*, 334-5.

²²⁹⁸ J.J. Clère, “Notes d’onomastique: a propos du dictionnaire des noms de personnes de H. Ranke,” *RdE* 3 (1938): 113; Vernus, “Etudes de Philologie et de Linguistique (II),” 116.

²²⁹⁹ Ranke, *Personennamen*, Cat. 1, 20; 207, 13; 207, 27; 399, 14.

²³⁰⁰ Ibid., Cat. 289, 23; 277, 19; 389, 8; 289, 20; 277, 15; 277, 18.

²³⁰¹ Clère, “Notes d’onomastique,” 113, stele Rio di Janeiro ME 18 (2436).

²³⁰² Ranke, *Personennamen*, Cat. 207, 22; 417, 1; Clère, “Notes d’onomastique,” 113.

²³⁰³ P. Jürgens, “Der Tote als Miller zwischen Mensch und Göttern im Berliner Sargtext-Papyrus. Ein Zeugnis inoffizieller Religion aus dem Mittleren Reich.” *GM* 116 (1990): 55.

²³⁰⁴ Jürgens, “Der Tote als Miller,” 60.

inherit my office on earth."²³⁰⁵ Grapow had translated *spr=k n ntr(.w)* with "may you come to the gods."²³⁰⁶ Similar to Letters to the Dead, the dedicator of the papyrus considered the request justified given the provision provided to ensure the deceased transitioned into one of the transfigured dead.²³⁰⁷

Certain spells from the Coffin Texts can perhaps shed light on the question of whether the deceased was personally responsible for the procreation needed for birth or was simply an intermediary between relatives and the gods. One such relevant spell was CT 503,²³⁰⁸ where the seed which resulted from copulation, thus the location of the activity, was "on earth" (*tp t3*), a common expression used of the land of the living. Thus, Nyord had argued that Egyptian thought the deceased, serving the purpose of keeping his heir alive, actually created progeny among the living.²³⁰⁹ In addition, two similar passages, CT 697 and CT 405,²³¹⁰ clearly show the deceased visiting the living and procreating.²³¹¹

Evidence from the Letters to the Dead themselves are less clear, however. Papyrus Berlin 10482 most clearly placed the deceased as an intermediary. The only similar situation found in the Coffin Texts was the repeated reference to "the gods" in CT 94-96.²³¹² Here, the gods were portrayed as the ones responsible for the state of affairs described in the spells; specifically they were the ones who have commanded Osiris to procreate by means of the *b3*.²³¹³

²³⁰⁵ Jürgens, "Der Tote als Miller," 61.

²³⁰⁶ H. Grapow, "Über einen ägyptischen Totenpapyrus aus dem frühen Mittleren Reich," *SPAW* 1915: 379.

²³⁰⁷ Jürgens, "Der Tote als Miller," 61.

²³⁰⁸ H. Buchberger, "Das Harfnerlied im Grab des *K3(=i)-m-ḥnh* oder 'Die Riten des *sn ntrw*'" in *Gedenkschrift für Winifred Barta. ḥtp dj n ḥzj*, ed. D. Kessler and R. Schulz (MÄU 4; Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1995), 106-107; Faulkner, *The ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, CT VI, 89e-o; R. Nyord, *Breathing flesh: conceptions of the body in ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts* (CNI Publications 37. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2009), 430-1.

²³⁰⁹ Nyord, *Breathing flesh*, 432.

²³¹⁰ Faulkner, *The ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, V, 209k-210e and VI, 331 k-q.

²³¹¹ Buchberger, "Das Harfnerlied," 96-103; Nyord, *Breathing flesh*, 441.

²³¹² Faulkner, *The ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, II, 67a-90e; Nyord, *Breathing flesh*, 434-9.

²³¹³ Nyord, *Breathing flesh*, 452-3.

Schott had argued that, since the request was neither written in the imperative form "Give!" nor in the second person "May you give!", there seems to have been no thought of a direct generation by the dead.²³¹⁴ In all these examples, we find the verb as object for some form of *rdi*, "to cause/give", and the phraseology thus seems quite similar.²³¹⁵ The Berlin figurine and the birth request on Chicago E 13945 show that Egyptians thought the prospective mother's ancestors also had the ability to "cause birth".²³¹⁶ While all the addressees in these petitions were men, the sample is simply too small to exclude the possibility of petitions to female deceased relatives.²³¹⁷ Pinch,²³¹⁸ in contrast, had asserted that "The hypothesis that the *ka* of an ancestor was being asked to beget a child with the aid of the figurines cannot in any case apply to examples found in female burials or in temples." While individual letters may have addressed the deceased as an intermediary, it possible some of these petitions could have discussed the deceased actually engendering the requested child. Whether this supposition would be accurate for the statuettes was discussed above.²³¹⁹

The pleas for the dead to assist in fertility and childbirth served as votive items, similar to a number of other objects we will discuss in subsequent chapters.²³²⁰ Though few in number, these pleas appear to have followed a similar distribution as other votive objects. Specifically, Middle Kingdom pleas tended to occur in tombs within Egypt, while votives within Egyptian temples became more common in the New Kingdom.

While the pleas date from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom, the birth story from Papyrus Westcar, dating to the Middle Kingdom, had features that reappeared in the

²³¹⁴ Schott, "Die Bitte und ein Kind," 23.

²³¹⁵ Nyord, *Breathing flesh*, 450.

²³¹⁶ Nyord, *Breathing flesh*, 451.

²³¹⁷ Nyord, *Breathing flesh*, 451, Note 4376.

²³¹⁸ Pinch, *Votive offerings to Hathor*, 218.

²³¹⁹ See § 3.2.1.

²³²⁰ See for example statuettes of birth deities, figurines of dwarfs, apotropaia, and female figurines.

New Kingdom birth scenes. While the pleas asked generally for a child, Papyrus Westcar focused on the labor itself. While the letters to the dead can occur on figurines and statues, the papyrus mentioned several objects that may pertain to birth. Given the private nature of the pleas, interaction with deities tended to be less direct, with the deceased serving as intermediaries. This relationship is in contrast to the direct assistance the goddesses and Khnum provided parturient in the birth tale, likely due to the royalty of her offspring.

5.4 Westcar Papyrus

Westcar Papyrus,²³²¹ with its tale of the birth of the first three pharaohs of the 5th Dynasty assisted by goddesses, is another non-medical/magical text relevant for this discussion. Scholars had conventionally dated the text to the Second Intermediate Period based on paleography, format, and arrangement.²³²² Erman had stated that the story originated in the Middle Kingdom, with this version a later copy.²³²³ However, said “copy” was made at a much later point, so there is a question of later reworking or if it is faithful to the original.²³²⁴ The story of the births was in the third narrative and Hordjedef introduced it.²³²⁵

This tale of the birth of the three kings is relevant due to the inclusion of human elements in the divine birth. It is the only textual source discussing delivery and, indeed, it is the most detailed account of birth in ancient Egypt.²³²⁶ Scholars had viewed this story as a prototype for the later scenes of divine birth from Hatshepsut’s mortuary temple in Deir el-Bahari, with the

²³²¹ Simpson, *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 13-24; Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature I*, 215-221; C. Lalouette, *Textes sacrés et textes profanes de l'ancienne Égypte* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), 27-30; Blackman, *The story of King Kheops*; Bagnato, *The Westcar Papyrus*.

²³²² Hans Goedicke, “Thoughts on Papyrus Westcar,” *ZÄS* 120 (1993): 23.

²³²³ A. Erman, *Die Sprache des Papyrus Westcar. Eine Vorarbeit zur Grammatik der älteren ägyptischen Sprache* (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1889), 6.

²³²⁴ Goedicke, “Thoughts on Papyrus Westcar,” 24.

²³²⁵ *Westcar* 9, 21ff.; Cf. A. Erman, *Die Märchen des Papyrus Westcar* (1890), 58ff.

²³²⁶ Tyldesley, *Daughters of Isis*, 73; Watterson, *Women in ancient Egypt*, 90, note 40.

claim the children were of Re.²³²⁷ There is little evidence for such notions.²³²⁸ According to Goedicke, the divine ladies realized they had not left marvels “for these three children to repeat to their father who had made us come,”²³²⁹ so there is no evidence of Re’s fatherhood.²³³⁰ Rudjedet’s condition²³³¹ was as wife of a priest of Re foremost.²³³² While one can glean some aspects of childbirth from the text, Goedicke’s²³³³ argument that these were the births of normal babies is incorrect, especially since each golden-skinned baby measured a cubit, which is 52cm. Only one such baby would be much too large for a woman to bear, much less three.

Re, who the text described as Lord of Sakhebou, sent Isis, Nephthys, Heqet, Meskhenet, along with Khnum, to aid in the delivery of Rudjedet. Sakhebou was a locality in Lower Egypt near Heliopolis, the sacred city of Re.²³³⁴ The goddesses, disguised as “dancing girls” came upon Rawoser with “loincloth upside down.”²³³⁵ Altenmüller had interpreted Rawoser’s state of dress as due to the excitement of the impending birth.²³³⁶

Though Staehlein²³³⁷ had viewed this reference as sympathetic magic, much like the untying of knots to ease childbirth in Mesopotamia,²³³⁸ it is more likely that this phrase indicated his flustered state, since birth was a female prerogative.²³³⁹ According to Wendrich, there does

²³²⁷ Altenmüller, “Die Erzählungen des Papyrus Westcar,” 269; Erman caption, *Die Sprache des Papyrus Westcar*, II: “Geschichte der Kinder des Re.” Cf. Posener, *De la divinité du pharaon*, 90ff.

²³²⁸ Hans Goedicke, “Rudjet’s delivery,” VA I (1985): 20.

²³²⁹ Westcar 11, 11-12.

²³³⁰ Goedicke, “Rudjet’s delivery,” 20.

²³³¹ Westcar 9, 9-10.

²³³² Goedicke, “Rudjet’s delivery,” 20-21.

²³³³ Goedicke, “Rudjet’s delivery,” 23.

²³³⁴ Lalouette, *Textes sacrés*, 28, n. 3.

²³³⁵ Westcar 10,2. Goedicke, “Rudjet’s delivery,” 21.

²³³⁶ H. Altenmüller, “Die Erzählungen des Papyrus Westcar. Geschichte am Hof des Königs Cheops und die Prophezeiung der Geburt der Könige der frühen 5. Dynastie als Sohne des Sonnengöttes,” in *Sahure: Tod und Leben eines grossen Pharaos: Eine Ausstellung der Leibeghaus Skulpturensammlung, Frankfurt am Main, 24. Jun ibis 28. November 2010*, ed. Vinzenz Brinkmann (München: Hirmer, 2010), 268.

²³³⁷ E. Staehelin, “Bindung und Entbindung,” ZÄS 96 (1970): 125-139.

²³³⁸ For example, see Scurlock, “Baby-snatching demons,” 137-142.

²³³⁹ Goedicke, “Rudjet’s delivery,” 21.

not appear to be any ancient Egyptian reference to support the notion that Egyptians untied knots to guarantee unhindered birth.²³⁴⁰ The appearances of the phrase *whꜥ tswt* in the funerary literature, such as PT 593a Utterance 358,²³⁴¹ "O first-born of Shu, your knots are loosened by the two lords of the Abyss," seem here related to a Middle Kingdom administrative term for "solving your problems," since the usual term for restriction in these cases was *wt ntt*.²³⁴² However, several texts implied that enemies could tie spirits,²³⁴³ such as *BD* 180, "Do not tie me with your ropes (*nwhꜥw*)"²³⁴⁴. Likewise, "their ropes (*nwhꜥw*) are in their fingers"²³⁴⁵ and "my manifestation (*hꜥ*) is not knotted (*zꜥw*) by the keepers of Osiris."²³⁴⁶ In addition, other funerary spells clearly illustrated gods setting free someone from the bonds of death.²³⁴⁷ "He (Ra) has come to you, he has come you that he may loosen the lassos (*ḳꜥḥ*) and cast off the bonds; he has saved me from Kherty and he will never give me to Osiris, for I have not died the death. I possess a radiant spirit (*ꜥh*) in the horizon and stability in Djedut."²³⁴⁸ So, while there is no evidence to confirm Staehelin's theory, and it makes more sense to consider the disordered kilt of Rawoser as evidence of distress, knots do seem to have had an ambivalent value.²³⁴⁹

To some scholars, the disguise of the goddesses as "dancing girls" indicated the low status of midwives.²³⁵⁰ However, as mentioned above, the latter did not occur in lists of medical professionals.²³⁵¹ Instead, this guise as dancers assimilated them to Hathor, the mother goddess

²³⁴⁰ Wendrich, "Entangled," 258-9.

²³⁴¹ Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, 116.

²³⁴² Wendrich, "Entangled," 259-260.

²³⁴³ Ogdon, "Knots and ties," 31.

²³⁴⁴ Faulkner, *Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*, Spell 180, line 8.

²³⁴⁵ Book of Gates: Piankoff, *Le Livre des Portes* I, X, middle register.

²³⁴⁶ Faulkner, *Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, vol. 1, CT I, 362d, 364a.

²³⁴⁷ Ogdon, "Knots and ties," 31.

²³⁴⁸ Faulkner, *Pyramid Texts*, PT §§ 349-350.

²³⁴⁹ Ogdon, "Knots and ties," 33.

²³⁵⁰ Feucht, *Das Kind*, 101; Janssen and Janssen, *Growing up in ancient Egypt*, 10-11.

²³⁵¹ Ghalioungui, *Physicians of Ancient Egypt*, 45.

par excellence, who also presided over music and dance.²³⁵² In mythology, Isis would protect Horus, so it is likely that attendants were also imbued with the power of goddesses like Hathor, Taweret, Heqet, Meskhenet, Isis, and Nephthys.²³⁵³ The *menat*-necklaces and sistras they rattled at Rawoser were traditional instruments of Hathoric dances.²³⁵⁴ These instruments had metal elements that, when agitated, produced a sharp, loud noise, a feature the dancers used to ward off evil forces in vulnerable areas such as those around the chamber of delivery.²³⁵⁵ The divine musicians and female protectors were familiar in scenes of Egyptian birth, generally represented in the New Kingdom on ostraca which show the new mother on a bed or sitting on a seat holding her child under an arbor decorated with vines.²³⁵⁶ Music and prophylactic dance also accompanied funerals.²³⁵⁷

After they assured him that they “understood childbirth,” the goddesses saw Rudjedet and “they locked the room behind themselves and her.”²³⁵⁸ To Toivari-Viitala, the description of the distressed husband, wearing his loincloth “upside down” at the house when Rudjedet’s delivery was at hand in the Westcar story,²³⁵⁹ showed that the husband was at home when the event took place.²³⁶⁰ Hansen had contended that the goddesses telling Rawoser to leave the room signified that the husband did not attend childbirth, much like modern Egypt.²³⁶¹ However, the evidence

²³⁵² Lalouette, *Textes sacrés*, 28, n.5.

²³⁵³ Szpakowska, *Daily life in ancient Egypt*, 24.

²³⁵⁴ Lalouette, *Textes sacrés*, 28, n.6.

²³⁵⁵ Lalouette, *Textes sacrés*, 28, n.6; Spieser, “Meskheneet et les Sept Hathors,” 66.

²³⁵⁶ A.R. Schulman, “A birth scene from Memphis,” *JARCE* 22 (1985): 97-103; Brunner-Traut, *Die Alten Ägypter*, 56-60; Spieser, “Meskhenet et les Sept Hathors,” 66.

²³⁵⁷ Muu dancers in New Kingdom scenes, for example the Theban tomb of Rekhmire: S. Hodel-Hoenes, *Leben und Tod im Alten Ägypten, Thebanische Privatgräber des Neuen Reiches*, p. 130 and fig. 63.


²³⁵⁸ P. Westcar 10,7.

²³⁵⁹ P. Westcar 10,2.

²³⁶⁰ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 284.

²³⁶¹ Hansen, “Motherhood,” 212.

from records found at Deir el-Medina indicates that men were at least sometimes present during childbirth.²³⁶²

Khnum's role in the text differed from that of the other deities. In his role as a creator of humans, relief representations depicted Khnum forming the body and *k3* of the king.²³⁶³ As Rawoser only addressed the ladies, Khnum probably did not enter with them.²³⁶⁴ In Simpson's translation, Khnum carried a birth-stool,²³⁶⁵ and, for each child, "caused his limbs to move."²³⁶⁶ In contrast, other translations had Khnum as a porter carrying "light baggage",²³⁶⁷ with him after each birth said to have "gave health to his body."²³⁶⁸ For the former section, the text stated Khnum was "under" a *ḫni* (). Some scholars had translated this word as "palanquin or portable shrine,"²³⁶⁹ with the current determinative being confused with an older determinative.²³⁷⁰ About Khnum, Erman had interpreted a statement about him as "*ḫnmw* machte seine Glieder heil," assuming Khnum conveyed health to the baby, meaning "Gesundheit verliehen."²³⁷¹ All translations subsequently had assumed this connotation up to Lichtheim, except Simpson, who translated *swḏ3* "to cause to move" when concerning the body, related to preservation beyond death.²³⁷² This is neither an otherwise attested role for Khnum to bestow health, nor would such an act fit into the context.²³⁷³ The second and third birth descriptions show that Khnum's deed did not occur after Meskhenet's pronouncement, so the first should be

²³⁶² See § 5.5 below.

²³⁶³ For example: E. Feucht, "Verjüngung und Wiedergeburt," *SAK* 11 (1984): 406.

²³⁶⁴ Goedicke, "Rudjet's delivery," 21.

²³⁶⁵ Simpson, *Literature of ancient Egypt*, 21.

²³⁶⁶ Simpson, *Literature of ancient Egypt*, 22.

²³⁶⁷ Hannig, *Großes Handwörterbuch*, 860.

²³⁶⁸ Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* I, 220; Bagnato, *Westcar Papyrus*, 82.

²³⁶⁹ Example, Faulkner, *A concise dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, p. 280.

²³⁷⁰ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 524, V19, note 12.


²³⁷¹ Erman, *Die Märchen*, 64.

²³⁷² Simpson, *Literature of ancient Egypt*, 22; ex. *Urk.* IV, 945,1.

²³⁷³ Dorman, "Creation on the potter's wheel," 83-99; Goedicke, "Rudjet's delivery," 25.

emended to <wn.in> *hnmw hr swd3 h'w.f*, the past narrative form “Khnum has made his limbs well.”²³⁷⁴ Khnum may have been none other than the transposition of the father figure that marks another rite of passage: the recognition of the child by the father.²³⁷⁵

During the labor, “Isis placed herself before her, Nephthys behind her, Heqet hastened the birth...after cutting the cord, they washed the baby and laid it to rest on a cushion.”²³⁷⁶ They thus reiterated the position they occupied in the resurrection of Osiris.²³⁷⁷ This position, along with the presence of four goddesses, had suggested to Raven cosmic connotations, with the woman, similar to the deceased in tombs until the end of the Middle Kingdom, oriented to the south.²³⁷⁸ Heqet used a method to “hasten” the births, which is unspecified.²³⁷⁹ To Goedicke, Heqet probably massaged the womb.²³⁸⁰ Heqet, the goddess in form of a frog, embodied and protected all at once the stomach and the movement of the legs of the parturient, reminiscent of frogs, to facilitate delivery.²³⁸¹

A difficult sentence follows, concurring to the Egyptian word for “navel (cord)”: (they cut off his umbilical cord) “placed on a sheet of brick ().”²³⁸² Previous scholarship had interpreted this phrase as either a couch/bed made of brick,²³⁸³ a cushion shaped

²³⁷⁴ Goedicke, “Rudjet’s delivery,” 25.

²³⁷⁵ Spieser, “Meskhenet et les Sept Hathors,” 68.

²³⁷⁶ P. Westcar, 10.7-8, 14-15. *Grundriß* III, 14, ft. c: The goddess has the shape of a frog, not a midwife toad. More details in H. Bonnet, *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*, 1952, under “frog” and “Heqet.”

²³⁷⁷ Lalouette, *Textes sacrés*, 28, n.7

²³⁷⁸ Raven, “Egyptian concepts,” 51.


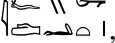
²³⁷⁹ Tyldesley, *Daughters of Isis*, 73.

²³⁸⁰ Goedicke, “Rudjet’s delivery,” 23; Weindler, *Geburts- und Wochenbettdarstellungen*, 37f.; *Grundriß* III, 1956, 14f.

²³⁸¹ Spieser, “Meskhenet et les Sept Hathors,” 66.

²³⁸² *Grundriß* III, 14.

²³⁸³ K. Sethe, *Erläuterungen zu den Lesestücken* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrich, 1927), p. 42 to Lesest. 33, 19; *Grundriß* III, 14, ft. d; Bagnato, *Westcar Papyrus*, 82.

as a brick,²³⁸⁴ or a reference to birth-bricks.²³⁸⁵ Under the former, the writing *ifdy* would have derived from the same rood as , "cloth." The variant writing , in a context that indicated some type of furniture,²³⁸⁶ would then indicate a translation of "couch."²³⁸⁷ Likewise, the notion of a brick-shaped pillow seems unlikely given that all the other known cases of such a cushion used the expression *dbt nt dzjw*.²³⁸⁸ The latter theory correctly noted that *ifd* "cloth" shared the same root as *ifd* "four,"²³⁸⁹ making the former possibly a reference to four birth-bricks. Indeed, the notion of a brick covered with a cloth also occurred in Ebers 789, where the prescription read, "Pine sawdust. Put this in dregs. Smear [this mixture over] brick covered in tissue and have her sit on it."²³⁹⁰ Likewise, a spell from Leiden I 348 referenced to a "brick of *nd* cloth."²³⁹¹ The birth-brick theory appears to have the most evidence. The variant of the word with a wood determinative likely referenced to a four-legged bed, as opposed to the four bricks serving as a "bed" in Papyrus Westcar.

With the naming, the story likely reflected a social practice where the name of the infant was principally attributed by the mother, and could recall the first words uttered by the mother, which may be considered as a sign of magical character and protection of the infant.²³⁹² For each infant, Meskhenet determined his fate.²³⁹³ Meskhenet approached the babies after they are

²³⁸⁴ Lalouette, *Textes sacrés*, 28; Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* I, 220.

²³⁸⁵ Altenmüller, "Die Erzählungen des Papyrus Westcar," 268; Roth and Roehrig, "Magical Bricks," 131-2; Wegner, "A Decorated Birth Brick," 472, 477-8.

²³⁸⁶ Admonitions of Ipuwer rt. 14, 2. For translation, see for example Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* I, 160; Simpson, *Literature of ancient Egypt*, 207.

²³⁸⁷ Faulkner, *Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, 17; Hannig, *Großes Handwörterbuch*, 46.

²³⁸⁸ Staehelin, "Bindung und Entbindung," 129f.; Roth and Roehrig, "Magical Bricks," 132.

²³⁸⁹ *Wb.* I, 71; Hannig, *Äg. Wb.* I, 70; *ibid.*, II, 171; Faulkner, *Middle Egyptian*, 17.

²³⁹⁰ Westendorf, *Handbuch der altägyptischen Medizin* II, 680.

²³⁹¹ Borghouts, *The Magical Texts of the Papyrus Leiden I 348*, cf. 4, recto 2.9, p. 16, pl. 2 and 19; Gnirs "Nilpferdstosszähne," 136, n. 62; Spieser, "Meskhenet et les Sept Hathors," 68, n.15.

²³⁹² Spieser, "Meskhenet et les Sept Hathors," 68.

²³⁹³ Feucht, *Das Kind*, N.451: Loc. Cit. Also with the birth of Hatshepsut, Meskhenet announced her fate (Urk. IV, 227; Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 98, IX Db). In the Berlin 3027, Meskhenet called for a *k3* to be made with the birth. For a detailed description of pregnancy and birth see Brunner-Traut, *Alten Ägypter*, 50ff.; Staehelin, "Bindung und Entbindung," 29ff.

washed and rested and the text describes her as “proceeding to” the babies and making a statement on their future.²³⁹⁴ The three concepts of fate, luck (or fortune), and destiny were designated by three different Egyptian terms: *šꜣꜣj*, *rnnt* and *mshnt*.²³⁹⁵ They were equally personified by divinities: the god Shay and his female counterpart, the goddess Renenet, were present at birth as well as at rebirth in the moment of the weighing of the heart, and Meskhenet, either the “place of birth” or the bricks of childbirth.²³⁹⁶ The impression from the text is that this goddess was a matronly figure,²³⁹⁷ similar to her motherly persona in the New Kingdom divine birth scenes and later mammisi.²³⁹⁸ According to Goedicke, she served as the mother-in-law of the mother, since marriage meant the bride lived in the groom’s home.²³⁹⁹ This structure may not always have been valid at Deir el-Medina, where each workman generally had his own house.²⁴⁰⁰

Scattered evidence from P. Westcar (11, 18-19) suggests an isolation post-birth: “Rudjedet purified herself in a cleansing of fifteen days.” Wilfong had cited the Deir el-Medina ostraca that list supplies for festivals as further evidence of this isolation period, with one called “the purification of his daughter.”²⁴⁰¹ We currently don’t know what was involved with this “purification,” with Deines suggesting it may have been symbolic.²⁴⁰²

The birth story from Westcar papyrus highlighted aspects seen with other birth material ranging from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom. The association of dancers, particularly of Hathor, with childbirth occurs in Type A female figurines and at least one *lit*

²³⁹⁴ Goedicke, “Rudjet’s delivery,” 23.

²³⁹⁵ Spieser, “Meskhenet et les Sept Hathors,” 65.

²³⁹⁶ J. Baines, “Contexts of Fate”; Ch. Seeber, *Untersuchung zur Darstellung des Totengerichts*, pp. 83-88; Spieser, “Meskhenet et les Sept Hathors,” 65.

²³⁹⁷ Goedicke, “Rudjet’s delivery,” 23.

²³⁹⁸ Cf. Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 120f.

²³⁹⁹ Goedicke, “Rudjet’s delivery,” 23-24; S. Allam, “Quelques aspects du mariage dans l’Égypte ancienne, *JEA* 67 (1981), 116ff.

²⁴⁰⁰ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 179.

²⁴⁰¹ Wilfong, “Menstrual synchrony,” 423.

²⁴⁰² *Grundriß* III, 15.

clos.²⁴⁰³ Like the New Kingdom royal birth scenes,²⁴⁰⁴ Isis and Nephthys represented divine midwives. Similarly, objects depicting frogs, likely representing Heqet, often occurred in association with fertility and birth.²⁴⁰⁵ The birth bricks of the text have a physical manifestation in the Abydos birth brick and likely-related cubic rods.²⁴⁰⁶

While the birth story from Papyrus Westcar represented a Middle Kingdom version of the divine birth myth, the texts from Deir el-Medina discussed below pertained to the private lives of tomb workers. Both types of texts mentioned birth-related objects, though there is generally more certainty surrounding the materials mentioned in the latter versus the former. While Papyrus Westcar may suggest a Middle Kingdom separation between males and females during the birth process, the Deir el-Medina documents indicate that men could be present during labor in at least the New Kingdom. Both types of texts likewise mention a post-birth isolation period, demonstrating that the practice continued from at least the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom.

5.5 Records from Deir el-Medina

Some of the entries in necropolis journals, texts listing the attendance and absences of tomb workers from work, and a few private letters and documents from the New Kingdom workmen's village of Deir el-Medina mention birth. While the former cite a wife's childbirth as a reason to be absent from work, the latter two types range from some simple mentions to texts discussing delivery of goods for preparation of the event or to celebrate the end of a woman's post-partum confinement. Notably, these texts indicate some involvement of husbands and

²⁴⁰³ See §§ 3.2.1 and 7.5.2.3.

²⁴⁰⁴ See below, § 7.3.2.

²⁴⁰⁵ See above, § 2.4.

²⁴⁰⁶ See below, §§ 7.2.1-3.

fathers, as well as the wider community of the village, in birth and post-partum rituals of this period.

There are currently five known necropolis journals in which childbirth, involving either a workman's wife or daughter, was mentioned. In the first, O. CGC 25516 (vso. 17),²⁴⁰⁷ the wife of *ḥsy-sw-nb.f* gave birth. The date is damaged, but it has to be somewhere between III *pṛt* 28 (vso. 12) and IV *pṛt* 6, year 1 (Siptah) (vso. 26).²⁴⁰⁸ This couple is also attested on a stela (Manchester 4588)²⁴⁰⁹ with a son and two daughters. Janssen²⁴¹⁰ suggested that the birth mentioned in the absence record may refer to the birth of one of these children.

The second journal, O. CGC 25517 δ (vso. 6-7),²⁴¹¹ read, "The wife of Kasa being in childbirth II *ḥt* 23, year 1 (of Siptah). Kasa stayed away from work three days." This longer absence was most likely due to a difficult delivery,²⁴¹² as opposed to the entry being an error of writing "giving birth" instead of "purification" as Janssen²⁴¹³ had supposed. Text O. CGC 25531 (rto. 5),²⁴¹⁴ whose date is destroyed, read, "[...]-*mswt mst*," with a woman named [...]-*mswt* giving birth, while another journal, O. Cairo J. 72452 (l.6) stated, "*msy msw ///*, I *pṛt* 16, year 2 (Siptah). The whole crew was absent."²⁴¹⁵

²⁴⁰⁷ Černý, *Ostraca hiératiques*, p.14* (verso).

²⁴⁰⁸ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 172.

²⁴⁰⁹ M.L. Bierbrier, *The tomb-builders of the pharaohs* (Cairo: American University of Cairo, 1989), fig. 17; J.E. Quibell, *The Ramesseum*, British School of Archaeology in Egypt: 2 (London: B. Quaritch, 1898), pl. X/3.

²⁴¹⁰ Jac. J. Janssen, "Two personalities," in *Gleanings from Deir el-Medina*, ed. R.J. Demarée and Jac. J. Janssen, *Egyptologische Uitgaven I* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut Voor Het Nabije Oosten, 1982), 114.

²⁴¹¹ Černý, *Ostraca hiératiques*, p. 17* (verso), pl. XI.

²⁴¹² Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 172, note 278.

²⁴¹³ Janssen, "Absence from work," 142.

²⁴¹⁴ Černý, *Ostraca hiératiques*, p. 30*, pl. XX.

²⁴¹⁵ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 172.

Interpretation varies on whether the birth mentioned in P. Turin 2044²⁴¹⁶ was a case of absence from work or not.²⁴¹⁷ P. Turin 2044, a necropolis journal, contained the reference (vso. 2, 9) of *ms m gr <ḥ> in Mn-nfr-m-ḥb, the birthing at night by Mn-nfr-m-Hb*, in a passage discussing reported unrest in the area. It is unclear if such an absence meant there were complications.²⁴¹⁸ The likely explanation for this specific note of giving birth, added in the text, is that it occurred on this specific date.²⁴¹⁹

Since these references to birth are so few in number, Toivari-Viitala had suggests that these were special circumstances, such as a very difficult labor, which required the husband's presence.²⁴²⁰ She also had posited that some of the entries in the journals, which did not specify a reason for a workman's absence, might also have been due to childbirth, while some births may have simply taken place during days not listed in the documents.²⁴²¹

Clearly, the occurrence of giving birth did at least occasionally interfere with the work routine of the men, and so was accordingly recorded in the official necropolis journals. As giving birth was an occasion noted in the official written documentation, Egyptians did not seem to have considered it as something concerning exclusively the women or belonging only within "a female domain,"²⁴²² at any rate during this period. It clearly involved at least some of the husbands as well, likely due to the serious risks involved, contrary to Goedicke.²⁴²³ This recording of births in

²⁴¹⁶ RITA 6, pp. 340-343.

²⁴¹⁷ Meskell, *Private life in New Kingdom Egypt*, 69-70 treated it as such, while Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 173 discussed this case as an instance where "giving birth is not solely recorded as a reason for absence from work."

²⁴¹⁸ Meskell, *Private life in New Kingdom Egypt*, 69-70.

²⁴¹⁹ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 173.

²⁴²⁰ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 172.

²⁴²¹ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 172.


²⁴²² Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 172-3.

²⁴²³ Goedicke, "Rudjet's Delivery," 21 n.9, 24-25.

the journals does seem logically analogous to the entries of deaths of both men and women in the same type of documents.²⁴²⁴

In addition to the journals, private correspondence referred to childbirth. For example, in Papyrus Bibliothèque Nationale 198, II,²⁴²⁵ a letter, the male author states (vso. 4): *i.iri ms.tw=k m p3 pr*, it was when I was in the house that you were born. This statement, like the evidence above, indicated that the presence of men in a house where a woman was giving birth was not taboo,²⁴²⁶ at least during the Ramesside period. Another letter, O. Nelson 13, discussed the circumstances of a servant woman of sculptor Neferenpet who had given birth. Here, the text stated the actual date of the woman's delivery (vso. 6-7), III *prr* 20, indicating that days of birth functioned as points of reference in discourses.²⁴²⁷ The letter also specified that the woman be given provisions for likely a post-parturition period such as food and wood, presumably because she gave birth to the child of the sculptor.²⁴²⁸

Other documents, such as the recto of ODM 952 (formerly known as O. IFAO. 1069),²⁴²⁹ noted the delivery of goods related to birth and, in this case, post-partum isolation. While most of it enumerated quantities of food and drink, the first lines run:

1. ...given (*rdit*) to him at the
2. confinement²⁴³⁰ of his daughter:
3. 1 wooden *ytit* ()

²⁴²⁴ For examples, see Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 173, note 282.

²⁴²⁵ E. Wente, *Late Ramesside Letters*, Studies in Oriental Studies 33 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), no. 46, pp. 79-80.

²⁴²⁶ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 173-4.


²⁴²⁷ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 174.

²⁴²⁸ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 179-180.

²⁴²⁹ Jac.J. Janssen. "Gift-giving in ancient Egypt as an economic feature," *JEA* 68 (1982): 255.

²⁴³⁰ According to Janssen, "Gift-giving," 255, this could also mean 'birth', but the daughter would have been an adult if the *s of *t3y-s* (*st*) in line 4 referred to the daughter (and not to *ytit*).

4. spread²⁴³¹ in her place.²⁴³²

Notable among the gifts was the wooden *ytit* mentioned above, which occurred in at least fifteen ostraca.²⁴³³ The word, mostly written  with variants, was always written with the wood determinative,²⁴³⁴ indicating it was some type of furniture, and the writing was perhaps a variant for *stt*, "bed",²⁴³⁵ which the ostraca distinguished from the New Kingdom term for a regular bed, *hʿti*.²⁴³⁶ Since most of these texts also mentioned the prices of decorating funerary equipment such as coffins, Janssen initially had argued that *ytit* was likely a funerary bed.²⁴³⁷ However, he had more recently acknowledged that the evidence from ODM 952 indicates that *ytit* was also used in daily life.²⁴³⁸ Based on several texts mentioning that the *ytit* was *ss*, "decorated",²⁴³⁹ which did not occur with *hʿti*, Janssen now had considered *ytit* to most likely be a couch.²⁴⁴⁰

O. Michaelides 48 rt.²⁴⁴¹ contains a similar text. It recorded various kinds of food, some at least in connection with private feasts, and, in col. II, 1 read: 'The purification (*ssb*) of his daughter', followed by what also seem to be quantities of food.²⁴⁴² It thus appears that on special occasions, such as the birth of a child and festivals like New Year's Day, the people of Deir el-Medina presented each other with small quantities of food and, in a few instances, with objects in

²⁴³¹ *ss.ti*, 'spreading' of a bed: cf. *Wb.* II, 482, 19; L. Lesko, *Dict. LE* III, 97.

²⁴³² This place could have referred to the "women's place" mentioned in OIM 13512 or a birth arbor, see Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 181.

²⁴³³ For lists of the texts, see Janssen, *Commodity prices*, Table 36; Janssen, "Gift-giving," 255.

²⁴³⁴ Janssen, *Commodity Prices*, 239.

²⁴³⁵ *Wb.* I, 23, 11-12; cf. also *Wb.* I, 50; Hannig, *Äg. Wb.* I, 22; Faulkner, *Middle Egyptian*, 6.

²⁴³⁶ Janssen, *Commodity Prices*, 239-240.

²⁴³⁷ Janssen, *Commodity Prices*, 239-240.

²⁴³⁸ Jac. J. Janssen, *Furniture at Deir el-Medina including wooden containers of the New Kingdom and Ostrakon Varille 19* (London: Golden House Publications, 2009), 3.

²⁴³⁹ O. Gardiner 151, vs. 1-2; *Hier. Ostr.* 60, 5, 2; O. Berlin 12343, 1-2; Lady Franklyn Hier. Inscr. 5, 7; O. Gardiner 134, 3-4; O.IFAO 764, 5; O. Strasbourg H 84, 3, 8; O. Gardiner 139, 1,2; O. Černý 20, 3,8.

²⁴⁴⁰ Janssen, *Furniture*, 4.

²⁴⁴¹ Goedicke and Wente, *Ostraka Michaelides*, pl. 71-2.

²⁴⁴² Janssen, "Gift-giving," 255-6.

daily use.²⁴⁴³ Another such text is O. CGC 25521, which has the journal entry *pꜣy=f ḥb [n] tꜣy=f šrit*, "his feast [because of?] his daughter,"²⁴⁴⁴ which might refer to a birthday party.²⁴⁴⁵

At least two receipts of purchases from Deir el-Medina, O. Gardiner 133 (vso. 9) from Year 36 of Ramses II and O. Gardiner 9²⁴⁴⁶ from the late 19th Dynasty mentioned *sꜣw n msw*, "birth amulets."²⁴⁴⁷ The term *sꜣw* is known to have designated "amulet."²⁴⁴⁸ While the texts are unclear what type of object was a *sꜣw n msw*, *sꜣw* is plural in all three instances, with the two from O. Gardiner 9 occurring with a number of items specified as 'one,' while the first did not have a number, which indicates it was one item.²⁴⁴⁹ This evidence may designate that the amulet in question contained several pieces.²⁴⁵⁰ One theory on the identification of the amulet had stated it was a wire pendant shaped like a cow uterus, a shape that occurred in ancient Egypt (Figure 222) and Mesopotamia (Figure 223), and was still worn by pregnant women in early-modern Egypt.²⁴⁵¹ However, there does not appear to be any actual evidence, whether archaeological or textual, of this shape occurring as an amulet in ancient Egypt. More likely, based on the medical-magical spells discussed above,²⁴⁵² dwarf amulets representing Bes would have served as birth amulets. Notably, men purchased the birth amulets in all three instances. However, the number of sources is the far too low for one to conclude that men generally purchased or provided the

²⁴⁴³ Janssen, "Gift-giving," 256.

²⁴⁴⁴ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 181.

²⁴⁴⁵ Feucht, *Kind*, 115.

²⁴⁴⁶ Černý and Gardiner, *Hieratic Ostraca*, v.1, pl. 24, 4.

²⁴⁴⁷ Janssen, *Commodity prices*, 310.

²⁴⁴⁸ *Wb.* III, 415, 12-17; Hannig, *Äg. Wb.* II, 2075; L. Lesko, *Dict. LE* III, 5.

²⁴⁴⁹ Janssen, *Commodity prices*, 310-11.

²⁴⁵⁰ Janssen, *Commodity prices*, 311.

²⁴⁵¹ H. Frankfort, "A Note on the Lady of Birth," *JNES* 3.3 (1944): 198-200; Janssen, *Commodity prices*, 310-311.

²⁴⁵² See above, § 5.2.4.3.

women with items needed during the birthing, while some women might have purchased their own birthing equipment.²⁴⁵³ The value of these items ranged from one to three *deben*.²⁴⁵⁴



Figure 222 (left) – Relief of Meskenet from Hatshepsut mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari. Wilkinson, *Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 153.

Figure 223 (right) – Relief depicting Mesopotamian birth goddess Nintu. E. Van Buren, "A Clay relief in the Iraq Museum," *AfO* 9 (1933-34): fig. 1.

Likewise, three purchase receipts mentioned a "woman's bed." Two of these texts, O. Varille 13 (= O. Louvre E 27678) (lines 2-3),²⁴⁵⁵ which dates to Year 3 of Merenptah/Amenmesse, and O. Gardiner 105,²⁴⁵⁶ dating to the late 19th Dynasty, mention the making and price for a "woman's bed" respectively. Both texts refer to the purchase and exchange of various items, which do not seem to relate to each other, such as basketry and sarcophagi. O. Gardiner 9²⁴⁵⁷ discussed two such beds, including the decoration (*sš*) of one,

²⁴⁵³ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 175.

²⁴⁵⁴ Janssen, *Commodity prices*, 311.

²⁴⁵⁵ P. Grandet, "Cinq ostraca hiéroglyphiques documentaires du Musée du Louvre," in *Mélanges offerts à François Neveu: par ses amis, élèves et collègues à l'occasion de son soixante-quinzième anniversaire*, ed. Ch. Gallois, P. Grandet and L. Pantalacci (Cairo: Institut François d'Archéologie Orientale, 2008), pp. 168-170, 175.

²⁴⁵⁶ Černý and Gardiner, *Hieratic Ostraca*, v.1, pl. 53, 1.

²⁴⁵⁷ Černý and Gardiner, *Hieratic Ostraca*, v.1, pl. 24,4.

which were the only such beds decorated.²⁴⁵⁸ Based on the description of these beds as decorated, Barbara Lesko had viewed these beds as the so-called box-beds from houses in Deir el-Medina.²⁴⁵⁹ However, the use of the wood determinative indicates that these beds were of wood, not brick.²⁴⁶⁰

This low number of references to these beds compared to ones without specifications or marked as small or large indicates that the former may not have been regular pieces of furniture.²⁴⁶¹ This notion is further supported by a case, O. BM 50737,²⁴⁶² where a woman purchased a bed, where the bed was only referred to as a regular bed.²⁴⁶³ Likewise, there was neither a man's bed²⁴⁶⁴ nor a child's bed among the texts.²⁴⁶⁵ Toivari-Viitala had supported this theory by noting all the purchases of O. Gardiner 9, which include one birth amulet (*d*), 2 bundles of vegetables (*smw*), one large basket (*kbs*), one (?) sieve (*mtrh*), one wooden woman's bed (*ht hꜥti st*), one decorated woman's bed (*hꜥti st sš*), and a(nother) birth amulet (*sꜣw msw*).²⁴⁶⁶ With the combination of birth amulets, a woman's bed as well as the decorated woman's bed, Toivari-Viitala has been inclined to see these items in the light of the Wochenlaube motifs, tying these beds with childbirth.²⁴⁶⁷

From the necropolis journals, letters, and purchase receipts from Deir el-Medina, it is clear that husbands and fathers, as well as the wider community, participated in birth and post-purification rituals. Whether it was, at least occasionally, buying a wife's birthing equipment, giving post-partum gifts, or attending the event itself, men from the Ramesside Period in Deir el-

²⁴⁵⁸ Janssen, *Commodity prices*, 181-182, Table 181.

²⁴⁵⁹ B. Lesko, "Household and domestic religion in ancient Egypt," 205.

²⁴⁶⁰ Ritner, "Household religion in ancient Egypt," 180-181.

²⁴⁶¹ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 177.

²⁴⁶² Robert Johannes Demarée, *Ramesside Ostraca* (London: British Museum Press, 2002), 138.

²⁴⁶³ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 178, note 318.

²⁴⁶⁴ B. Lesko, "Household and domestic religion in ancient Egypt," 205.

²⁴⁶⁵ For full list, see Janssen, *Commodity prices*, Table 181.

²⁴⁶⁶ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 177-178.

²⁴⁶⁷ Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 178. See in § 7.5.

Medina appear to have participated in childbirth. The documents from Deir el-Medina represented the daily lives of non-elites, in contrast to the texts for medical/magical practitioners, votive pleas to the dead, and royal birth legend from Papyrus Westcar. From the records of absences, Egyptians appeared to have continued the practice of a post-birth isolation period like that mentioned in Papyrus Westcar. The objects discussed in the Deir el-Medina texts, namely the Bes amulets and beds, were prominent materials of birth-bed iconography characteristic of the New Kingdom.

5.6 Concluding Remarks

The various texts examined in this chapter have shed light on some of Egyptian childbirth and fertility practices. Birth did not always take place in an exclusively female domain but occurred in the presence of male magicians as well as the husband and father at least some cases. Practices involving fertility and birth, such as medical-magical papyri, pleas to the dead, and records of purchases and work absences, seem to have been part of the regular life of both genders.

All the genres of texts discussed above featured considerable continuity from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom. For example, the fertility spells of the New Kingdom were direct parallels to those of Papyrus Kahun. The changes tended to be subtle, often building upon previous concepts, rather than major shifts. Even in genres dating to only one period, the materials and practices they mentioned featured similar continuity.²⁴⁶⁸ This pattern aligns with the trends present in the material culture surrounding birth and fertility.

The medical/magical texts featured a number of non-figural amulets. Cylinder amulets, the *psš-ḳf*, and *tjt*-knot amulets, similar to the medical/magical texts,²⁴⁶⁹ had particular focus on

²⁴⁶⁸ See above, §§ 5.4 and 5.5.

²⁴⁶⁹ See above in § 5.2; § 5.2.4.2; § 5.2.4.4.1.

color of the material, especially red for representing blood. While the acacia in the spells had direct parallel to the acacia-seed-shaped beads on girdles, there is less certainty on the possible connection between anti-miscarriage tampons and *tjt*-knots.

Features of some of the texts discussed above pertained to the use of certain representations of human fertility. The dancers of Papyrus Westcar, with their role in childbirth, may be parallel to Type A nude female figurines.²⁴⁷⁰ Likewise, New Kingdom jars in the form of a woman with a child²⁴⁷¹ may have held the milk of a mother who gave birth to a boy, a prominent ingredient in some of the medical/magical spells of both the New Kingdom and Middle Kingdom.²⁴⁷²

Some of the texts also mentioned materials associated with the place of birth. References to the four birth bricks in medical/magical spells of the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom include the bricks themselves, the repetition of incantations four times, and the use of four knots.²⁴⁷³ Likewise, Ebers 782,²⁴⁷⁴ a spell against a child crying, instructed to repeat the treatment over four days. Similarly, the decorated “women’s beds” in the Deir el-Medina purchase records were likely the birth-beds featured on Wochenlaube scenes of the New Kingdom.²⁴⁷⁵

Conceptually, some of the medical/magical spells bore similarities with apotropaic objects. The importance of protection during the day and night occurred in the London papyrus,²⁴⁷⁶ Berlin 3027,²⁴⁷⁷ and the wands,²⁴⁷⁸ spanning from the Middle Kingdom through the 18th Dynasty. The perception of birth as a transition, seen in Berlin 3038 spell 198 and Carlsberg

²⁴⁷⁰ See above, § 3.2.1.

²⁴⁷¹ See above, § 3.5.2.

²⁴⁷² See above in § 5.2.4.1; § 5.2.4.4.1; § 5.2.5.

²⁴⁷³ See above in § 5.2.6.

²⁴⁷⁴ *Grundriß* IV.1, 292.

²⁴⁷⁵ See below, § 7.4.

²⁴⁷⁶ London, spell 30.

²⁴⁷⁷ Berlin 3027, spells I, Q-U.

²⁴⁷⁸ See below, § 6.3.2.1.

VIII spell 6,²⁴⁷⁹ was prominent in the apotropaic iconography.²⁴⁸⁰ Like the references to the Abdu-fish,²⁴⁸¹ apotropaia commonly featured deities related to the sun god's journey at night on his barque. Whereas the texts indicated notable continuity, the apotropaia represented a solar birth iconography. This distinct set of motifs, along with the female-fertility imagery discussed above,²⁴⁸² characterized the Middle Kingdom to early 18th Dynasty.

²⁴⁷⁹ See above in § 5.2.4.1.

²⁴⁸⁰ See below, § 6.3.3.2.

²⁴⁸¹ In § 5.2.4.4.1.

²⁴⁸² See Chapters 3-4.

Chapter 6: Apotropaic Animals and Demons

6.1 Introduction

During the Middle Kingdom, particularly the Late Middle Kingdom, figures of animals such as cats, turtles, snakes, lions, and crocodiles, and fantastical beasts such as griffins, occurred on objects ranging from wands of mostly ivory, cups, and figurines. In the former two materials, the animal/demon figures appeared in association to the known birth deities Aha/Bes, Ipet/Taweret, and Heqet, so previous scholarship generally had connected the imagery to that of childbirth. However, since these objects predominantly came from funerary contexts, there is question on whether all of these materials could have applied to daily life. Of the objects, the wands most strongly belonged to the realm of fertility and birth. The similar imagery on a couple of spouted cups and vessels, found in the burials of infants, is suggestive. Likewise, the similarity of the faience animal figurines to that of the wands may indicate a comparable function. Interestingly, while many of the apotropaic figures later occurred in New Kingdom Netherworld Books, especially the Amduat, objects containing such imagery are less common, with scholars dating only a few wands to the period.

6.2 Iconography

Besides the birth deities discussed above,²⁴⁸³ various apotropaic deities/demons occurred in textual representations and on objects. These figures, which include lions, the Seth animal, griffins, serpopards, crocodiles, turtles, and snakes, appeared most frequently on the Late Middle Kingdom to early New Kingdom magic wands, though they also materialized on other objects of the same period that may have related to birth, such as the so-called “baby-feeding cups” and figurines. Some deities had known positive associations while others, such as turtles, snakes,

²⁴⁸³ See Chapter 3.

donkeys, and crocodiles, had ambivalent if not negative natures.²⁴⁸⁴ While some of the figures appeared in earlier periods, others seem related to the protective figures depicted in New Kingdom Netherworld Books. Several of them wield knives, which further underlines their apotropaic character.²⁴⁸⁵ An identification of each being is only rarely possible, since the names given do not refer to their divine identity. An exception appears for the standing lion, which was designated once Mut and one time as Sekhmet.²⁴⁸⁶

6.2.1 Lion deity

One of the most recurrent figures from the magic wands and other objects is a lion deity. This figure, most often standing on its hind legs, could also occur in recumbent and striding positions. Most frequently depicted on magic wands, rod segments,²⁴⁸⁷ and as faience figures,²⁴⁸⁸ the lion deity also appeared on various other objects, most notably a couple of feeding cups²⁴⁸⁹ and the Abydos birth brick.²⁴⁹⁰ Besides these materials, Egyptians depicted the lion deity in the context of the bedroom and personal adornment.

Like the hippopotamus goddess, the lion deity had various names, though Altenmüller had considered her to most often refer to Sekhmet or Pachet.²⁴⁹¹ Another possibility was Mahes, “the son of Bastet,” particularly in connection of the deity’s role in defeating Libyan enemies.²⁴⁹²

²⁴⁸⁴ Vink, “The Principles of Apotropaic Magic,” 13-14.

²⁴⁸⁵ B. van de Walle, “La tortue dans la religion et la magie égyptiennes,” *La Nouvelle Cléo* 5 (1953): 177.

²⁴⁸⁶ Copenhagen NM 7795: Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 50; H. Altenmüller, “Der rettende Greif: zu den Bildern des Greifs auf den sog. Zaubermessern des Mittleren Reiches,” in *Kleine Götter - große Götter: Festschrift für Dieter Kessler zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. M.C. Floßmann-Schütze et al. (Vaterstetten: Patrick Brose, 2013), 11.

²⁴⁸⁷ At least ten instances of the motif. See § 7.2.3.

²⁴⁸⁸ At least eleven examples in faience and three in ivory. See § 6.5.

²⁴⁸⁹ MMA 44.4.4 and UC 16644. See § 6.4.

²⁴⁹⁰ For discussion, see below, § 7.2.1.

²⁴⁹¹ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 145-6.

²⁴⁹² C. de Wit, *Le rôle et le sens du lion dans l'Égypte ancienne* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1951), 230-234; L. Habachi, *The Sanctuary of Heqaib* [Elephantine IV, ArchVer 33] (Mainz am Rhein: P. von Zabern, 1985), 93, Abb. 12 (Vol. I); Taf. 161c-163 (Vol. II); Altenmüller, “Zu den Feindbildern,” 79.

Sekhmet as a possible candidate is probable, given her role serving the sun god, such as destroying rebellious humans.²⁴⁹³ Likewise, she fought against other enemies of the sun god²⁴⁹⁴ and beat down Apophis,²⁴⁹⁵ as well as vouched for the sun god to enact justice in the world.²⁴⁹⁶ The lion goddess Pachet “the Biter” also had functions comparable to those of Sekhmet.²⁴⁹⁷ As a lioness who roamed the wadis and lived in the middle of the Eastern Desert,²⁴⁹⁸ she eliminated evil in the morning,²⁴⁹⁹ was “the lioness who sees in the dark and captures her prey”²⁵⁰⁰ “with sharp eyes and sharp claws,”²⁵⁰¹ and protected the deceased.²⁵⁰²

A couple of the magical knives/wands include a label for this lion deity. In front of the lion on Cairo JE 2007.04.58 (Figure 224),²⁵⁰³ the inscription described it as *ḥsm*. Copenhagen NM 7795 (Figure 34) used the same word in front of both examples of this image, with the former possibly followed by *zḥmt* “of Sekhmet” and *mwt* “of Mut” for the second.²⁵⁰⁴ This relationship between Mut and Sekhmet was also implied in a colossal vulture statue of Amenemhat III at Koptos linked to Sekhmet.²⁵⁰⁵ On this wand, the other image captions gave species names (*štw*, *rr*) or a deity name (*ḥkt*). Other than the two wands, the masculine form *ḥsm* is not otherwise attested.²⁵⁰⁶ Interestingly, a feminine form *ḥsmt* occurred in early Middle

²⁴⁹³ C. Maystre, “Le Livre de la Vache du Ciel dans les tombeaux de la Vallée des Rois,” *BIFAO* 40 (1941): 53-115.

²⁴⁹⁴ A. Piankoff, *Création du disque solaire* (Bibliothèque d'étude 19. Le Caire: Institut français d'Archéologie orientale, 1953), 36.

²⁴⁹⁵ A.M. Blackman, “The funerary papyrus of 'Enkhefenkhons,” *JEA* 4.2-3 (1917): 126; Pap. Bremner-Rhind 27, 15; 27, 19.

²⁴⁹⁶ *CT* VII, 170, 173.

²⁴⁹⁷ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 148.

²⁴⁹⁸ *Urk.* IV, 386.

²⁴⁹⁹ *CT* V, 388i.

²⁵⁰⁰ *CT* V, 389d, 399b.

²⁵⁰¹ *CT* V, 389h.

²⁵⁰² *CT* V, 260d.

²⁵⁰³ S. Voss “Ein ‘Zaubermesser’ aus K95.2,” *MDAIK* 55 (1999): 392; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. T10.

²⁵⁰⁴ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 337.

²⁵⁰⁵ Petrie, *Koptos*, 11-12, pl. XI.1; M. M. Luiselli, “Early Mut(s): On the Origin of the Theban Goddess Mut and her Cult,” *RdE* 66 (2015): 114.

²⁵⁰⁶ Leitz, *Lexikon* V, 654-9, 220-7.

Kingdom writings for the afterlife: "her *mꜣw* are the *ḥsmt* which eats the Libyans."²⁵⁰⁷ The lion-headed version of Mut also occurred in personal names,²⁵⁰⁸ as well as in an entry from a 19th Dynasty list of goddesses from Karnak noting Mut *ḥnt.t pr-Pth* "foremost of the temple of Ptah."²⁵⁰⁹ Indeed, it appears to have been a local Memphite form of the goddess.²⁵¹⁰

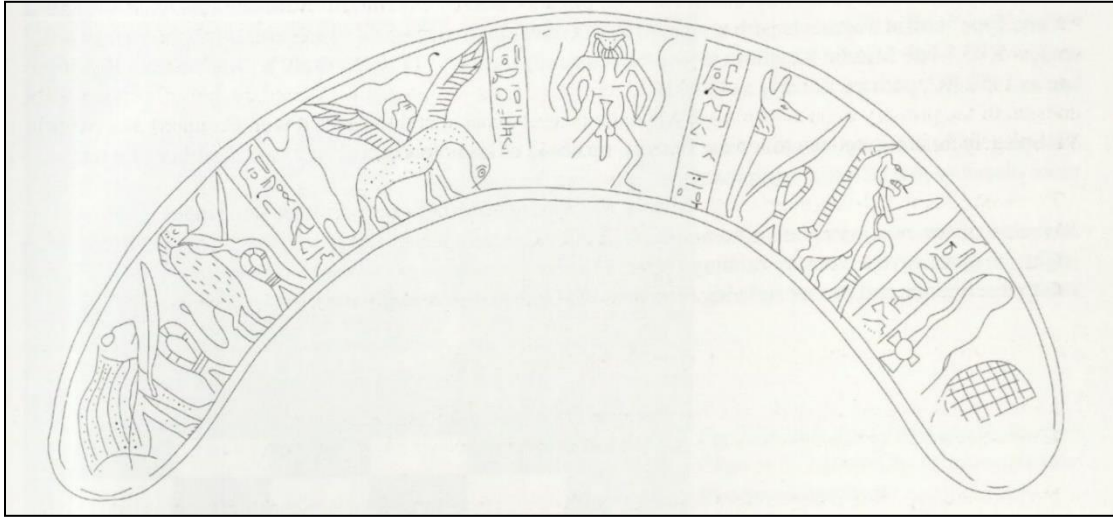


Figure 224 – Cairo JE 2007.04.58. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 2.21.

On the wands, variations of the lion standing on its hind legs include: knife-wielding and standing on *ḥh* with snake,²⁵¹¹ knife-wielding and standing on *sꜣ* with snake,²⁵¹² knife-wielding

²⁵⁰⁷ CT V, 136: Faulkner, *CT*, vol. 2, 33 n. 33 term "unknown".

²⁵⁰⁸ Luiselli, "Early Mut(s)," 114. Ex: Ranke, *Personnennamen* I, 148, no. 13; 85, 17; 171, 15; II, 350.

²⁵⁰⁹ Gardiner, *Onomastica* II, 125 (42).

²⁵¹⁰ J. Yoyotte, "Études géographique II. Les localités méridionales de la région Memphite et le 'pehou d'Héracléopolis'," *RdE* 14 (1962): 109.

²⁵¹¹ Manchester 1799: Quibell, *Ramesseum*, pl. III.2b; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 136.

²⁵¹² Cairo JE 2007.04.58; MMA 08.200.19 (Steindorff, "Magical knives," 106, n. 41; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, 76f., no. 90; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. L1).

and standing on *sꜣ* without snake,²⁵¹³ snake at mouth,²⁵¹⁴ destroying human,²⁵¹⁵ knife-wielding and standing on *ꜥnh* without snake,²⁵¹⁶ snake over *sꜣ* without knife,²⁵¹⁷ and knife only.²⁵¹⁸ At least eleven wands depicted the lion seated on its haunches,²⁵¹⁹ while the striding lion was less common.²⁵²⁰

In addition to wands, the lion deity also occurred on other objects. It appeared on bed furnishings, seal impressions, and items of personal adornment. They seem to have carried a similar meaning as the motif on the wands.

Certain bed furnishings and personal chests dating to the late Middle Kingdom, both from town and tomb contexts, show the lion deity standing upright. One such bedroom decoration is ivory inlay UC 16482 (Figure 225), located in the 1889 clearance of the late Middle Kingdom town-site near Lahun.²⁵²¹ Likewise, the deity also occurred on the headrest of Neferhotep, shown as a spotted upright lion with a sun-shaped mark on the shoulder holding a knife and biting a

²⁵¹³ Cairo JE 88890-1 (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. Bal1-2); ex- MMA 15.3.83 (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. L15); PAM 33.1578 (Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 129; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. Aj1).

²⁵¹⁴ Highclere Castle H86 (Carnarvon and Carter, *Five Years' Explorations*, 55; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. T6); Cairo JE6155 = CG9437 (Daressy, *Textes*, 46, pl. 12; Legge, "Magic ivories," (1905), 143, pl. 9, fig. 16; F. Lexa, *Le Magie dans l'Égypte ancienne* (Paris: Librairie orientaliste P. Geuthner, 1925), III, pl. 51, fig. 86; Petrie, *Objects of daily use*, pl. 37 L; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 43; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. T8); MMA 32.1.231 (Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 109; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. L2); MMA 22.1.153 (Hayes, *Scepter I*, 249, fig. 159; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 103; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. L12); MMA 22.1.154a-b (A. C. Mace, "The Egyptian expedition 1920-1921: I. Excavations at Lisht," *B MMA* 16.11 (1921): 18, fig. 16-17; Steindorff, "Magical knives," 46; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 249, fig. 159; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 104; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. L13).

²⁵¹⁵ UC16387: Petrie, *Objects*, pl. 37/16; UC15917 holding and biting decapitated man (Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 42, pl. 37/14; R. Drenkhahn, *Elfenbein im Alten Agypten: Leihgaben aus dem Petrie Museum London* (Hannover: Kestner-Museum, 1987), 68; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 14).

²⁵¹⁶ Liverpool M 11001: Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 52; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 24.

²⁵¹⁷ Moscow I, Ia 6736 (ИГ 2036): Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 84; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 52.

²⁵¹⁸ Brussels E6361: Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 21; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 58.

²⁵¹⁹ Ashmolean E2223, E2336; Berlin 6710; BM EA18175, EA65439; ex-Cecil Collection (Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 30; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. A1); Damascus NM 7021+7022; Florence 7553; Garstang E7007; MFA 03.1703; MMA 15.3.384, 15.3.951a-b, 22.1.154a-b; Philadelphia E2194.

²⁵²⁰ Ashmolean E2224; BM EA18175, EA24425; Cairo CG 9440 (=JE28142. Daressy, *Textes et dessins magiques*, 48, pl. 12; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, [after no. 46]; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 27); MMA 15.5.197, 30.8.218.

²⁵²¹ Petrie, *KGH*, pl. 8 no. 12; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 338, fig. 4.27.

snake.²⁵²² In addition to figures of Ipet and Aha, painted box Fitzwilliam E.15.1907 also depicted the upright lion, body yellow-brown, grasping a black snake.²⁵²³



Figure 225 – UC 16482, from Lahun. Image from Petrie, *KGH*, pl. 8 no. 12.

At Lahun, where most of the late Middle Kingdom seal impressions from the 1899 clearance present amuletic imagery, a much smaller number of seal impressions are figurative, but they include the single greatest number of seal impressions from one seal, a standing lion with *ꜥnh* and *wꜣs* hieroglyphs (Figure 226).²⁵²⁴ Egyptians may have used this motif to make a seal-amulet similarly powerful in the protection of woman and child in the rich home.²⁵²⁵

²⁵²² Miniaci and Quirke, "Reconceiving the Tomb," 344-6; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 339, fig. 4.30. For Ahat and Ipet from the same headrest, see above in § 2.2.1; § 2.5.1.

²⁵²³ Petrie, *Gizeh and Rifeh*, 20, pl. 24; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 339, fig. 4.31. For description of Aha and Ipet figures on the same box, see above in § 2.2.1; § 2.5.1.

²⁵²⁴ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 339, fig. 4.29; D. Ben-Tor, *Scarabs, Chronology, and Interconnections: Egypt and Palestine in the Second Intermediate Period* (Fribourg/Göttingen: Academic Press / Vandenhoeck Ruprecht, 2007), pl. 19.5 = O. Tufnell, "Seal impressions from Kahûn Town and Uronarti Fort," *JEA* 60 (1975): fig. 11.430; Petrie, *IKG*, pl. 9, no. 39 noting 151 examples; discussed in relation to the worked tusks in O. Keel et al., *Studien zu den Stempelsiegeln aus Palästina/Israel II* (Friburg Schweiz and Göttingen, 1989), 284-285.

²⁵²⁵ Quirke, *Lahun*, 88.



Figure 226 – Seal-impression of standing lion deity. Image from Petrie, *IKG*, pl. 9.39.

Items of personal adornment tend to depict either the upright or recumbent lion. A particularly interesting example is ivory hairpin BM EA30847,²⁵²⁶ with the top representing a lion standing on hind legs, with mouth open, while its forelegs hold back the arms of a kneeling man with right knee on the ground. Unfortunately, the head of the man, forepaws, and most of the arms of the man are not preserved. Some of the golden elements in jewelry from Middle Kingdom burials in Dahshur of daughters of the king show the lion in recumbent position.²⁵²⁷ Four pairs of such lions also occurred in necklaces from the 12th Dynasty burial of Sithathoriunet in Lahun (Figure 227).²⁵²⁸ From the Middle Kingdom tombs in Harageh and Heliopolis, recumbent lion amulets are attested in carnelian, steatite and green-glazed faience.²⁵²⁹ These objects occurred associated with women.

²⁵²⁶ From the cemetery/tomb of Hu. Petrie, *Diospolis Parva*, pl. 26; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 338, Fig. 4.26.

²⁵²⁷ Group of six in J. de Morgan, *Fouilles à Dahchour 1894-1895* (Vienna: Holzhausen, 1903), 61 no. 12, pl. 17 [fig. 439].

²⁵²⁸ Winlock, *Treasure*, 50-51, pl. 12.

²⁵²⁹ Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 164; no. vii Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. 50, classified as no. 10; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 342, Fig. 4.40.

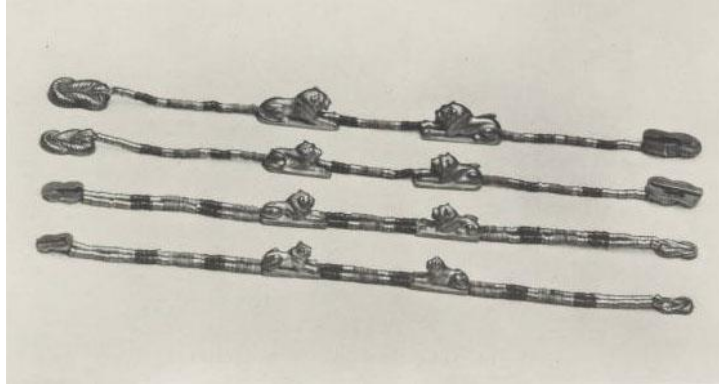


Figure 227 – Bracelets with recumbent lions. Image from Winlock, *The Treasure from el Lahun*, pl. 12A.

The lion deity appeared to have held similar meaning to that of Ipet/Taweret during the Middle Kingdom. Representations of the figure tended to show her wielding the same knives and/or protective signs associated with Ipet/Taweret during this period. Likewise, the presence of the lion on bedroom objects and seal impressions from Lahun indicate a domestic role for this being. While the lion deity became less common during the New Kingdom, she continued on at least on headrest, similar to the griffin.

6.2.2 Griffin

Imagery of the griffin dates back to palettes of the Predynastic and Early Dynastic Periods. However, given the gap in time between this earlier usage to the griffin's reemergence in the late Middle Kingdom, it is not safe to assume a similar function between the latter and the former. The motif in the late Middle Kingdom was most prevalent on birth-related materials such as the wands and one cup,²⁵³⁰ but also occurred in a few scenes from tombs in Beni Hasan and Bersheh.

²⁵³⁰ Latter: UC16644. For discussion, see below, § 4.4.2.

The griffin motif first appeared in Egypt during the late Predynastic,²⁵³¹ depicted on a knife blade,²⁵³² ivory knife blades,²⁵³³ a stone palette,²⁵³⁴ and at least one ivory statuette.²⁵³⁵ Another statuette, found in Tomb 721 at Naqada, may either represent Seth²⁵³⁶ or a griffin.²⁵³⁷ Excavators found the earliest known depiction of a griffin in the Old Kingdom in an area of rock carved with graffiti of the Fourth Dynasty in the Dakhla Oasis.²⁵³⁸ Another early picture of the griffin with raised wings came from a scene in the solar sanctuary of Neuserre.²⁵³⁹ All the other griffins known from the Old Kingdom date to the Fifth or Sixth Dynasty and occurred in relief depictions placed in either the valley temple or causeway of royal pyramid complexes. These two parts of the complexes likely represented earthly life, and the role of the king destroying foreign enemies.²⁵⁴⁰ This motif is well attested,²⁵⁴¹ occurring in temple reliefs from the Old,²⁵⁴²

²⁵³¹ Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Egyptian Griffon," 395.

²⁵³² J.E. Quibell, *Archaic Objects* (Cairo: IFAO, 1905), pl. 49.

²⁵³³ B. Adams, *Ancient Hierakonpolis* (Warminster, 1974), pl. 40, 327; UC14871; G. Dreyer, "Motive und Datierung der dekorierten prädynastischen Messergriffe," *L'art de l'Ancien Empire égyptien: Actes du colloque organisé au Musée du Louvre par le Service culturel les 3 et 4 avril 1998*, ed. C. Ziegler (Paris: Documentation Française, 1999), fig. 11.

²⁵³⁴ J.E. Quibell, *Hierakonpolis II* (BSAE 5; London: Quaritch, 1902), pl. 28.

²⁵³⁵ K. Cialowicz, "The Early Dynastic administrative-cultic centre at Tell el-Farkha," *BMSAES* 13 (2009): fig. 31.

²⁵³⁶ J. C. Payne, *Catalogue of the Predynastic Egyptian Collection in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 16, fig. 4.

²⁵³⁷ Cialowicz, "Tell el-Farkha," 95.

²⁵³⁸ K. Kuhlmann, "Der 'Wasserberg des Djedefre' (Chufu 01/1) Ein Lagerplatz mit Expeditionsinschriften der Dynastie im Raum der Oase Dachla," *MDAIK* 61 (2005): 285, fig. 48.

²⁵³⁹ F. W. von Bissing, "La chambre des trois saisons du sanctuaire solaire du roi Rathourès (Ve dynastie) à Abousir," *ASAE* 53 (1956): pl. 9; E. Edel and S. Wenig, *Die Jarezeitenreliefs aus dem Sonnenheligtum des Königs Ne-user-Re, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin* [Mitteilungen aus der ägyptischen Sammlung 7] (Berlin 1974), 16, pl. 1.

²⁵⁴⁰ A. Cwiek, "Relief Decoration in the royal Funerary Complexes of the Old Kingdom," (PhD diss., Warsaw University, 2003), 302-5; Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," 13.

²⁵⁴¹ S.-W. Hsu, "The 'Griffin' as a visual and written image for the king," *GM* 231 (2011): 45-56.

²⁵⁴² L. Borchardt, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Ne-user-re* (VDOG 7; Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1907), pls. 8-12; Borchardt, *S'ahū-re*, pl. 8; A. Labrousse and A. Moussa, *La chaussée du complexe funéraire du roi Ounas* (Cairo IFAO, 2002), 20, fig. 15.

Middle,²⁵⁴³ and New Kingdom.²⁵⁴⁴ Interestingly, these depictions of destruction, similar to those on the wands, did not depict the creature with V-shaped wings.²⁵⁴⁵ These pre-Middle Kingdom representations of griffins, along with other animals, appeared to be emblematic of power and control, with the royal scenes representing the king's defeat of chaos.²⁵⁴⁶ Building on this symbolism, Chauvet had suggested these scenes are apotropaic, and "meant to magically protect the complex from evil incursion."²⁵⁴⁷

The context in which griffin imagery occurred appears to have shifted in the late First Intermediate Period/early Middle Kingdom,²⁵⁴⁸ when depictions of griffins were preserved in five rock-cut tombs from Beni Hasan and el-Bersheh. Four of these tombs belonged to officials carrying the title of "Great Overseer of the Nome."²⁵⁴⁹ These scenes depicted the griffin along with other wild game of the Eastern Desert, presumably representing forces associated with death and chaos. The tombs of Baket III and Khety labelled the figure *sfr*.²⁵⁵⁰ In the tomb of Ahanakht

²⁵⁴³ Ex: Cairo CG 52002: J. de Morgan, *Fouilles à Dahchour I* (Vienna: A. Holzhausen, 1895), pls. 19, 21; M. Vilímková, *Altägyptische Goldschmiedekunst* (Prague: Artia, 1969), pl. 9; E. Feucht-Putz, "Die königlichen Pektore. Motive, Sinngehalt und Zweck," (PhD. Diss., München: Bamberg, 1967), 163 N. 4, pl. IV.4.

²⁵⁴⁴ Ex: Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," 13, pl. 3, fig. 9; (Thutmose IV date) MMA 30.8.45: Hayes, *Scepter II*, 153, fig. 84.

²⁵⁴⁵ Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," 16.

²⁵⁴⁶ Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffon," 396; Kemp, *Anatomy of a Civilization*, 92-9; J. Baines, "Origins of Egyptian Kingship," in *Ancient Egyptian Kingship*, ed. D. O'Connor and D. P. Silverman (PdÄ 9; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 111; F. Raffaele, "Animal rows and ceremonial processions in Late Predynastic Egypt," in *Recent Discoveries and Latest Researches in Egyptology, Naples June 18-20 2008*, ed. F. Raffaele et al. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 245-85.

²⁵⁴⁷ V. Chauvet, "Decoration and Architecture: The Definition of Private Tomb Environment," in *Servant of Mut: Studies in Honor of Richard A. Fazzini*, ed. S. D'Auria (Leiden: PdÄ 28, 2008), 46.

²⁵⁴⁸ Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffon," 397; H. E. Fischer, "The ancient Egyptian Attitude towards the Monstrous," in *Monsters and Demons in the ancient and medieval Worlds: Papers presented in Honor of Edith Porada*, ed. A. E. Farkas et al. (Mainz on Rhine: P. von Zabern, 1987.), 17.

²⁵⁴⁹ Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffon," 397-8.

²⁵⁵⁰ P.E. Newberry and F. Ll. Griffith, *Beni Hasan II* (ASE 2; London: EEF, 1894), pls. 4, 13; S. Sauneron, "Remarques de philologie et d'étymologie (§§ 26-35)," *BIFAO* 62 (1964): 16; S. Gerke, *Der altägyptische Greif: von der Vielfalt eines "Fabeltiers"* (BSAK 15; Hamburg: Buske, 2014), 137-8.

(Figure 228), the griffin, labelled *tštš*,²⁵⁵¹ wore a solar disk crown, cow horns, and plumes. The two representations of griffins in the tombs of Khety and Nehri (Figure 229) were both female, with the former, labelled *s3wgt*,²⁵⁵² visibly so. The latter scene identified the figure as *s3gt*.²⁵⁵³

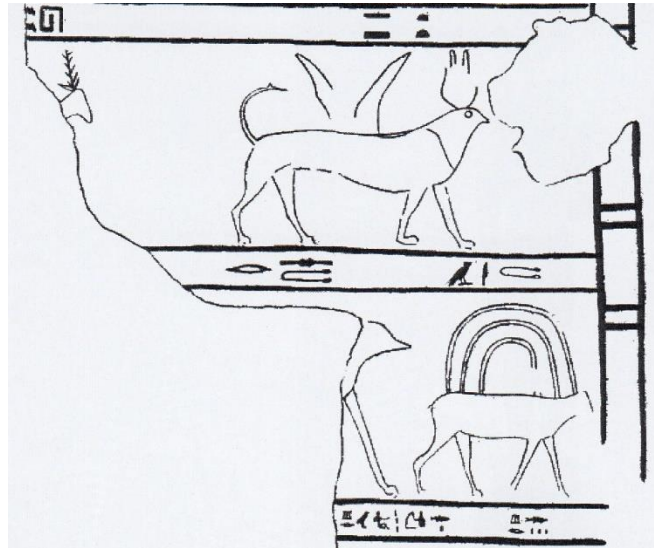


Figure 228 – Tomb scene of griffin, tomb of Ahanakht. Image from Newberry, *El Bersheh II*, pl. 16 detail.

²⁵⁵¹ P.E. Newberry, *El Bersheh II* (ASE 4. London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1895), pl. 16. As noted by Brovarski (Brovarski, "Ahanakht of Bersheh," note 139), the same creature occurred in *CT VII 160* (P. Gardiner III).

²⁵⁵² Newberry and Griffith, *Beni Hasan II*, pl. 16.

²⁵⁵³ Newberry, *Bersheh II*, pl. 11; J. Leibovitch, "Quelques éléments de la décoration égyptienne sous le Nouvel Empire: le griffon," *BIÉ* 26 (1944): 231ff.; Ibid., "Quelques éléments de la décoration égyptienne sous le Nouvel Empire: le griffon," *BIÉ* 27 (1945): 379ff.

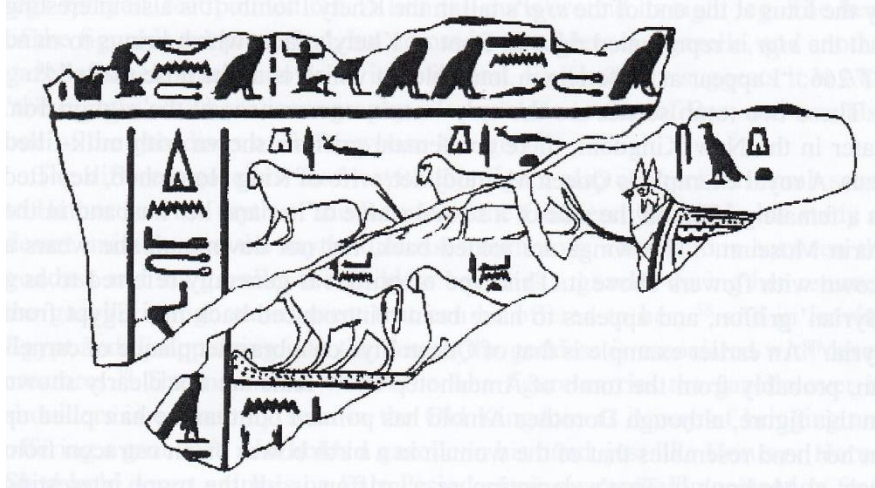


Figure 229 – Tomb scene with griffin, tomb of Nehery. Image from Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Griffon," fig. 5.

In a more complicated hunting scene, on the top of the main chamber's north wall from the tomb of Khnumhotep II, the smaller part of the topmost register showed the winged griffin with a human head between its wings as the fourth animal in a row.²⁵⁵⁴ Davies' drawing of the scene illustrates the figure as spotted, like a leopard, and its head very serpent-like.²⁵⁵⁵ This type of griffin is similar to those on the wands.²⁵⁵⁶

On the south wall of his tomb, Khety I stood facing to the east, with his wife behind him. A griffin stood right in front of his face. The griffin was female, as she had a row of teats, filled with milk hanging below her abdomen. She wore a collar and a short leash, and her wings are folded down on her back. Interestingly, her tail ended with the shape of a lotus, and in the facsimile done by de Garis Davies,²⁵⁵⁷ the lotus was blue. Above the griffin, a label read: *s3wg m.s*, "her name is *s3wg*". Another example of this same female griffin occurred on a fragment of

²⁵⁵⁴ Newberry and Griffith, *Beni Hasan I*, pl. 30; Gerke, *Der altägyptischen Greif*, 136; Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffon," 398, Fig. 3.

²⁵⁵⁵ N. de Garis Davies, "The Egyptian expedition 1931-1932: The Work of the Graphic Branch of the Expedition," *BMMA* 28/4 (1933): fig. 7.

²⁵⁵⁶ Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," 13.

²⁵⁵⁷ de Garis Davies, "The Egyptian expedition 1931-1932," fig. 5 and MMA 33.8.14.

wall decoration from Tomb 4 of Nehery I at el-Bersheh (Figure 229).²⁵⁵⁸ This figure, named *s3gt*, occurs in association with a male and female pair of baboons and another of monkeys.

A parallel for this griffin with a blue lotus tail is the pectoral from the tomb of Princess Meret, daughter of Senwosret III, where two female griffins flank the cartouche of Senwosret III and crush foreign enemies.²⁵⁵⁹ This pectoral continued the royal iconography of the griffin from the Old Kingdom, but, with the addition of the lotuses, the griffin figure became protective of creation and regeneration.²⁵⁶⁰ Another contemporary pectoral²⁵⁶¹ bears a similar griffin along with a number of protective symbols, including the figures of Seth and Horus, who also appeared as protective figures on a few apotropaic wands.²⁵⁶²

On one scene from the tomb of Ahanakht at El-Bersheh (Figure 228), two partially damaged registers illustrated animals walking away in front of the standing tomb owner.²⁵⁶³ The first animal in the top register was a winged griffin with something on its head, possibly horns, a crown, or a bouquet, from which the tips of two plumes project. This head ornament resembles that worn by the god Nefertem, the personification of the blue lotus from whose petals the sun was born.²⁵⁶⁴ A similar type of diadem also appeared associated with Hathor,²⁵⁶⁵ occurring in the

²⁵⁵⁸ Newberry, *El Bersheh*, pl. 11; Gerke, *Der altägyptischen Greif*, 139; Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffin," 403, Fig. 5.

²⁵⁵⁹ Saleh and Sourouzian, *Egyptian Museum Cairo*, no. 110; Aldred, *Jewels of the Pharaohs*, pl. 41.

²⁵⁶⁰ Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffin," 401-2.

²⁵⁶¹ S. Spurr et al., *Egyptian Art at Eton College* (New York: Metropolitan Museum, 2000), 16, no. 8; Gerke, *Der altägyptischen Greif*, 141.

²⁵⁶² Ex: Berlin 14207 (Legge, "Magic Ivories," (1905), pl. 4; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* II, 11-2, no. 10); Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffin," 402.

²⁵⁶³ Newberry, *El Bersheh* II, 34-5, pl. 5; Gerke, *der altägyptischen Greif*, 139-40; Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffin," 406, Fig. 6.

²⁵⁶⁴ See discussion by P. Munro, "Nefertem und das Lotus-emblem," *ZÄS* 95 (1969): 34-40, esp. 36-9; Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffin," 406.

²⁵⁶⁵ Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffin," 407-10.

tomb of Sat-Hathor-Iunet²⁵⁶⁶ and on women in a couple procession scenes,²⁵⁶⁷ likely a festival of Hathor, from the 12th Dynasty tomb of the count and governor Ukh-hotep at Meir.

Rather than trampling enemies, the griffin on magic wands demonstrated their combative nature by grabbing a snake in its mouth (Figure 230)²⁵⁶⁸ and, in a few cases, holding a knife.²⁵⁶⁹ The griffin motif occurred relatively often on the wands, so Altenmüller had based his iconography-based typology partly on its depictions. As seen below, however, that typology no longer holds with Quirke's new dating.²⁵⁷⁰ The griffin on the wands possibly had a name. On wand Cairo JE 2007.04.58,²⁵⁷¹ the hieroglyphic inscription in front of the image includes an indistinct name which appeared in the published line-drawing as *tpty*, but it has been re-interpreted as *in-ḥrt*.²⁵⁷² If Inheret was intended, the griffin would relate directly to the return of the Eye of the Sun-god.²⁵⁷³ Another possible reading of the griffin's name is *tpj-ꜥ* [*spdt*], "Forerunner [the Sothis]," which would be a name of a decan.²⁵⁷⁴ Full publication of Cairo JE 2007.04.58 may clarify the reading.

²⁵⁶⁶ Saleh and Sourouzian, *Official Catalogue*, 111.

²⁵⁶⁷ A. Blackman, *The Rock Tombs of Meir* VI (ASE 29; London: EEF, 1953), pl. 10, 19; Brunner-Traut, *Tanz*, 40-41.

²⁵⁶⁸ Ex: Baltimore WAM 71.510; Florence MA 2053; Cairo CG 9434; Cairo CG 9437; Leiden F 2003/12/1; UC35310.

²⁵⁶⁹ Ex: Baltimore WAM 71.510; Boston MFA 03.1703; Brussels E 6361; Cairo CG 9434, etc. Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," 16.

²⁵⁷⁰ See below, § 6.3.1.

²⁵⁷¹ Voss, "Ein 'Zaubermesser' aus K95.2," 392, 396.

²⁵⁷² Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," 11-27.

²⁵⁷³ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 356.

²⁵⁷⁴ Altenmüller, "Zu den Feinbildern," 85-86.



Figure 230 – Obverse and reverse of Baltimore WAM 71.510. Image from Steindorff, “Magical knives,” figs. 1-2.

In Altenmüller's *Apotropaia*, he had considered the griffin as a Horus deity, who beat down enemies and destroyed enemies as helper of the sun god.²⁵⁷⁵ W. Barta had highlighted another aspect:²⁵⁷⁶ the griffin as a hypostasis of the battle gods Horus, Thoth, Sopdu, and Montu, and a manifestation of the sun god, who was drawn as a flying being over the mountain. The theory of the griffin as Horus is further supported by a counterpart Seth-animal-griffin, which also had a human head between wings.²⁵⁷⁷ The human head between the wings of the griffin motif appeared to have been that of an Egyptian, rather than a foreigner.²⁵⁷⁸ Whether Egyptian or

²⁵⁷⁵ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, 33-36, 158-160.

²⁵⁷⁶ W. Barta, "Der Greif als bildhafter Ausdruck einer altägyptischen Religionsvorstellung," *JEOL* 23 (1973-1974): 335-357.

²⁵⁷⁷ Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," 14. Horus and Seth, who are arranged in an orderly manner, appear on a pectoral of the Middle Kingdom from Dahshur: Feucht-Putz, "Die königlichen Pektoreale," 166 no. 10, Taf. V.10.

²⁵⁷⁸ Altenmüller, "Der rettende "Greif," 14.

foreigner, the function of the head appeared to have been to magically render any potential rebellious beings defeated and harmless.²⁵⁷⁹ Given the blood stream outflowing from the forehead from two examples,²⁵⁸⁰ the figure is a dead person,²⁵⁸¹ likely representing as “pars pro toto” for a person.²⁵⁸²

Another possibility is the griffin functioned as a decan, serving as one of many figures of the magic knives that were combined into constellations concerning the return of the sun's eye to the sun-god.²⁵⁸³ The second section of the Esna text, which detailed the role of the decans in the retinue of the Sun God, had a partial parallel in P. Leiden I 346, 3-6 dating from the 18th Dynasty.²⁵⁸⁴ In the text of the New Kingdom, the *hꜣtjw* demons took the place of the decans of the Esna text.²⁵⁸⁵ If the name of the griffin on wand Cairo JE 2007.04.58 is “Forerunner [the Sothis],” it would be the name of a decan that played a significant role in the Middle Kingdom in the New Year,²⁵⁸⁶ in which the goddess Sothis reappeared and the sun god was reborn.²⁵⁸⁷

The association of the griffin with desert animals, particularly monkeys and baboons, both on the wands and in a scene from the tomb of Nehery I, and the fact that the griffin has its wings folded down, fit in with the story preserved in the demotic Myth of the Eye of the Sun, or

²⁵⁷⁹ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 355.

²⁵⁸⁰ F. Legge, “The magic ivories of the Middle Empire,” *PSBA* 28 (1906): pl. 3, nos. 51-2; also, Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, vol. II, nos. 52 and 85.

²⁵⁸¹ See *PT* [535] 1288c; [569] 1439c; [570] 1453a, f; *Urk.* 1, 50.15; H. G. Fischer, “The Butcher *Ph-r-nfr*,” *Or* 29 (1960): 188; Frandsen, “*Bwt* in the Body,” 151 n. 46.

²⁵⁸² Altenmüller, “Der rettende “Greif,” 14, n. 30

²⁵⁸³ H. Altenmüller, “Anubis mit der Scheibe im Mythos von der Geburt des Gottkönigs,” *SAK* 42 (2013): 15-35; Altenmüller, “Der rettende Greif,” 17.

²⁵⁸⁴ M. Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit: die beiden Bücher die altägyptischen Schalttage des magischen pLeiden I 346* [GOF IV, Reihe Ägypten 37] (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), 34-41.

²⁵⁸⁵ Altenmüller, “Zu den Feinbildern,” 84.

²⁵⁸⁶ C. Leitz, *Altägyptische Sternuhren* (OLA 62; Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 101-102.

²⁵⁸⁷ Altenmüller, “Zu den Feinbildern,” 86.

the Return of the Wandering Goddess.²⁵⁸⁸ In the myth,²⁵⁸⁹ Hathor (or Tefnut or Sekhmet), a personification of the Eye of Re, got enraged and went into the desert in the south. The sun sent various agents to bring her back, particularly Thoth in the guise of a baboon. The goddess was persuaded to return, and as she did so, various peoples and animals accompanied her. Probably related to this myth was a hymn to Hathor of Gold at the entrance of the Temple of Medamud, greeting the goddess as she returns and enters the temple to give birth to the sun god.²⁵⁹⁰ Monkeys and baboons offered her praise, while "the griffin swathes himself for you with his wings."²⁵⁹¹ Sabbahy had suggested that the *s3gt* represents such a pacified griffin.²⁵⁹² The blue lotus at the end of the griffin's tail from the tomb of Khety I, as well as the griffin's appearance on birth wands, hint at fertility and (re)birth.²⁵⁹³ There is some suggestion that the Myth of the Eye was written down already in the New Kingdom.²⁵⁹⁴

After its initial use as a royal symbol from the Predynastic through the Old Kingdom, the griffin motive saw a revival in the Middle Kingdom. The symbolism, however, shifted to the griffin as an apotropaic desert being and member of the sun god's retinue. Certain features, like

²⁵⁸⁸ Altenmüller, "Der rettende Grief," 11-27; Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffon," 405. See earlier suggestion of this by D. Kessler, "Der satirisch-erotische Papyrus Turin 55001 und das 'Verbringen des schönen Tages'," *SAK* 15 (1998): 187, fig. 52, pointed out by Horváth, "Hathor and her Festivals at Lahun," 141.

²⁵⁸⁹ J. F. Quack, *Einführung in die Altägyptische Literaturgeschichte*, vol. III (Münster: Lit, 2005), 148-60; and for a bibliography of versions, translation, and commentaries F. Hoffmann and J.F. Quack, *Anthologie der Demotisch Literatur* (Münster: Lit, 2007), 356-8.

²⁵⁹⁰ Darnell, "Hathor Returns to Medamūd," 47-94.

²⁵⁹¹ J. F. Quack, "Animals of the desert and the return of the goddess," in *Desert animals in the eastern Sahara: Status, economic significance, and cultural reflection in antiquity. Proceedings of an Interdisciplinary ACACIA Workshop held at the University of Cologne December 14-15, 2007*, ed. H. Riemer et al. (Köln: Heinrich-Barth-Institut, 2009), 348, and see 339, n. 15, reading griffin as singular rather than as Darnell, "Hathor Returns to Medamūd," 80, who translated: "The griffons cover themselves for you with their wings."

²⁵⁹² Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffon," 405-412.

²⁵⁹³ Sabbahy, "Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Griffon," 412; Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," 21.

²⁵⁹⁴ See A. von Lieven, "Fragments of a Monumental Proto-Myth of the Sun's Eye," in *Actes du IXe congrès international des études démotiques, Paris 31 août – 3 septembre 2005*, eds. G. Widmer and D. Devauchelle (Cairo: IFAO, 2009), 173-181.

the blue lotus, held fertility and regenerative connotations. Similar to the lion deity, the griffin also held some bedroom association, appearing in at least on headrest from the New Kingdom.²⁵⁹⁵

6.2.3 Long-necked feline

The long-necked feline was another characteristic figure on the Middle Kingdom magic wands. On the wands and a couple of contemporary feeding cups,²⁵⁹⁶ the most frequent form combined a leopard or lion head with waving neck, the body without fur markings, the back mostly flat except for a rise near the front, feline legs apart and striding, and a long tail. Another motif usually filled the space above the back and tail. In at least one case, the serpopard had a s3-sign on its back.²⁵⁹⁷ This creature, originating in Sumerian and Elamite art, first appeared in Egypt during the Early Dynastic Period, most famously on the ceremonial siltstone palette of king Narmer.²⁵⁹⁸ During the Middle Kingdom, desert hunting scenes from tombs at Beni Hasan depicted serpopards as well as griffins, though not necessarily as prey.²⁵⁹⁹ Altenmüller had considered the serpopard to be the god Antj, a god whose Middle Egyptian cult could have survived in the city sign of Kusae.²⁶⁰⁰ The unusual hieroglyph depicts a man standing on the backs of, and holding the necks of, two outward-facing long-necked felines, but these have short tails rather than the long feline tails of the Early Dynastic depictions and the Middle Kingdom wands.²⁶⁰¹ Apparently, then, the precise form of long-necked feline, including feline head and feline tail, was attested in Egypt only in the Early Dynastic and on the worked wands.²⁶⁰² The

²⁵⁹⁵ BM EA63783. See above, Figure 29.

²⁵⁹⁶ See § 6.4 below.

²⁵⁹⁷ Baltimore WAM 71.510; Capel and Markoe, *Mistress of Heaven*, 64.

²⁵⁹⁸ D. Wengrow, *The Origins of Monsters: Image and cognition in the first age of mechanical reproduction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 62 with nn. 36-37 on pp. 122-123.

²⁵⁹⁹ Newberry, *Beni Hasan I*, pl. XIII; *Ibid.*, *Beni Hasan II*, pls. IV and XIII.

²⁶⁰⁰ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia I*, 160.

²⁶⁰¹ A. Blackman, *The Rock Tombs of Meir II* (ASE 23; London: EEF, 1915), 31 n. 4, citing examples from the tomb-chapels of the early to mid-12th Dynasty governors of Qesy, at Meir.

²⁶⁰² Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 392.

serpopard likely represented control of wild animals or nature,²⁶⁰³ with the desert as a chaotic Sethian zone.²⁶⁰⁴ This association with the desert margin would thus help the creature protect the sun god in his nightly journey to be reborn each day.²⁶⁰⁵

6.2.4 Serval/Caracal/Cheetah/Cat

Another kind of feline, slenderer than a lion or leopard, and/or with differently proportioned limbs and more square-shaped head, occurred on various objects from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom including amulets, wands (Figure 231, top), figurines, a box, cubic rods, and a birth brick.²⁶⁰⁶ For the vast majority of the material, it is difficult to impossible to distinguish which type of feline the artist was depicting. For wands, the felines were not always distinct from the leopard and long-necked felines, and, for those with fur markings, it is hard to separate a striped serval from an African wild cat (*felis silvestris lybica*) on small-scale depictions.²⁶⁰⁷ While a raised head could be characteristic of a cheetah, that neck posture may have reflected compositional considerations, rather than naturalistic rendering. For example, on Louvre E3614+MMA 26.7.1288, the upright neck of the feline is symmetrical with the long-necked feline.²⁶⁰⁸ Similarly, Wegner had noted about the feline on the Abydos birth brick that the bulbous tail-tip may be a stylistic trait of the painter, in a depiction otherwise depicting a serval.²⁶⁰⁹ In addition to these visual ambiguities, the word *miw*, “cat,” covered several species,

²⁶⁰³ P. Germond and J. Livet, *An Egyptian Bestiary. Animals in Life and Religion in the Land of the Pharaohs* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2001), 193; D. Meeks, “Fantastic animals,” in *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* I, ed. D.B. Redford (Oxford, 2000), 505.

²⁶⁰⁴ B. Judas, “Keftiu and Griffins: An Exploration of the Liminal in the Egyptian World View,” in *Current Research in Egyptology 2012: Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Symposium, University College London and King’s College London, 2014*, ed. M. Pinarello et al. (Oxford and Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2015), 126.

²⁶⁰⁵ For more on these “threshold” deities, see below, § 6.3.3.2.

²⁶⁰⁶ For the latter two, see §§ 7.2.3 and 7.2.1 respectively.

²⁶⁰⁷ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 389.

²⁶⁰⁸ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 389.

²⁶⁰⁹ Wegner, “A Decorated Birth-Brick,” 465 with n. 47.

though *miw* 𐩣𐩢 "greater cat" may have been the technical term for the serval.²⁶¹⁰ In view of the difficulties in species identification, Quirke had grouped the examples of cats and slender felines instead by their posture: seated, standing, striding.²⁶¹¹

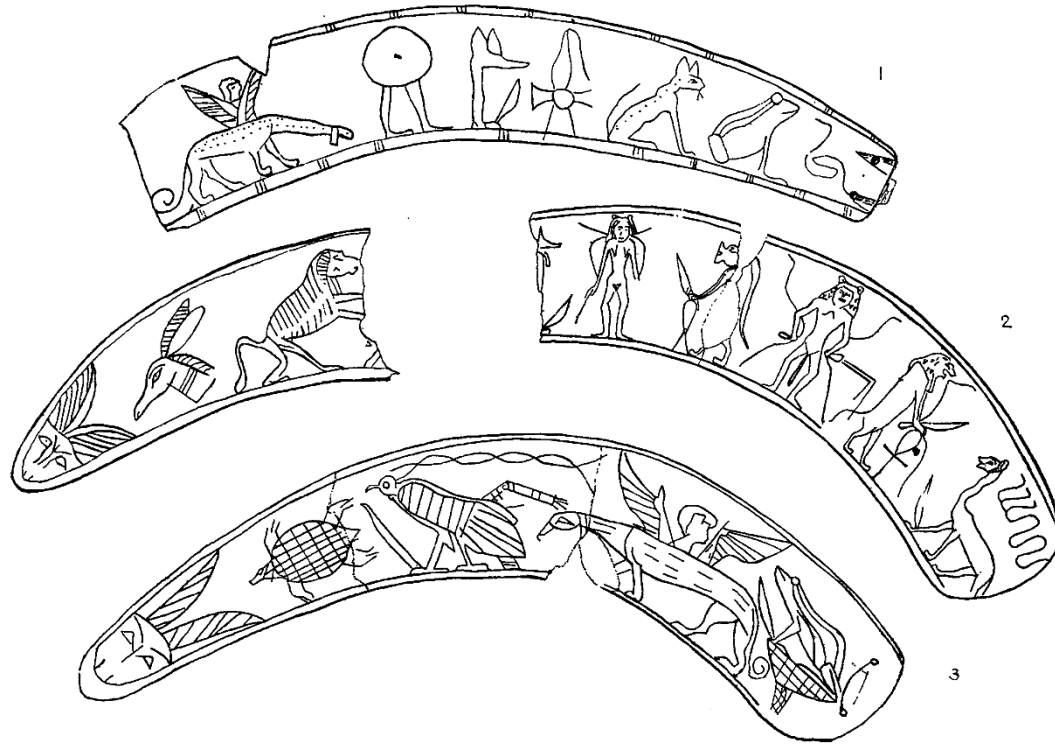


Figure 231 – Birth wands from Ramessesum tomb. Image from Quibell, *Ramesseum*, pl. 3.1-3.

Cat amulets first appeared in the 6th Dynasty and were used continuously into Roman times. Over time, the initial small and not well-articulated amulets transitioned to larger and more detailed forms, with the physical features and face more distinct, while having the same poses.²⁶¹² Characteristic of the Middle Kingdom were crouched simple amulets with the back

²⁶¹⁰ P. Meyrat, "Miw 𐩣𐩢: grand chat ou serval?" *GM* 224 (2010): 87-92.

²⁶¹¹ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 389.

²⁶¹² H. Györy, "On the history of feline amulets: a preliminary study of the so-called cat amulets," in *Liber amicorum: speculum siderum; Nūt astrophoros: paers presented to Alicia Maraceila*, ed. N. Guilhou (Archaeopress Egyptology 17; Oxford: Archaeopress, 2016), 245.

humped,²⁶¹³ which tended to be made of semi-precious stones typical for Middle Kingdom amulets²⁶¹⁴ or faience.²⁶¹⁵ Perhaps dating to the late Middle Kingdom²⁶¹⁶ or Second Intermediate Period,²⁶¹⁷ a blue-glazed steatite spacer depicting a row of five animals with upright heads, perhaps identifiable as cats from pointed ears, was placed on the waist of a child in tomb 1895 in Tarkan. This finding may indicate some association of the feline with the protection of children, given the placement of contemporary feline figurines in temples of Hathor²⁶¹⁸ and the depiction of Hathor-heads on the back of a number of New Kingdom cat scaraboids.

The situation with the feline amulets changed drastically during the 17th -18th Dynasties, when the naturalistic style took overhand. Even so, in many cases the amulets are too small and sketchy to make a definite identification. Moreover, body markings were rarely modelled, so in general the shape helps only in identification.²⁶¹⁹ New Kingdom amulet types range from 1 cm length crouching felines with large pointed ears on a base,²⁶²⁰ usually of carnelian, glazed steatite, or faience, and half-crouching cats, either modeled in relief form²⁶²¹ or, mostly, in the round.²⁶²²

²⁶¹³ Györy, "Feline amulets," 247.

²⁶¹⁴ Ex: amethyst, 2 carnelian and 1 quartz felines (C62200-622-3; cf. N. Langton, *The cat in ancient Egypt: illustrated from the collection of cat and other Egyptian figures formed by N. & B. Langton* (Cambridge: University Press, 1940), 18, no. 84-88, VI.

²⁶¹⁵ MFA 13.3548.

²⁶¹⁶ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 390-1.

²⁶¹⁷ R. Merrillees, *The Cypriote bronze age pottery found in Egypt* [Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 18] (Lund, P. Åström, 1968), 30-31, identifying the animals on the quintuple spacer as hedgehogs.

²⁶¹⁸ See below in § 6.5.1.

²⁶¹⁹ Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 260.

²⁶²⁰ Ex: Gurob Tomb 484 (18: Brunton and Engelbach, *Qau I*, 16, Tomb 484, pl. XLII no. 6D, Groupe pl. XXIX.) of a young girl; child pit-grave (Ramesside) in Gurob (19: Brunton and Engelbach, *Qau I*, 16, Tomb 480, pl. XXVII, no. 22 and pl. XLII, no. 6D); UC27837-IV (green glazed faience or glass) and UC27805 (carnelian), this time from the New Kingdom town site (20: Thomas, 1981, no. 279A and 327.); MMA 26.8.121a, Gabbanat el Qurud, Wadi D, Tomb 1); two tiny feline amulets (22: Ayrton et al., *Abydos III*, 49, pl. XVI, no. 7.) were found in Abydos in a girl's tomb (u26); green glazed faience amulet buried for a child in Badari (23: UC51737, the excavation number gives 25/5500, thus 25th tomb in Cemetery 550 of Badari.); blue glazed faience amulet was found in Deir el-Medina, (24: Bruyère, *Rapport* 26, 54, fig. 11.) in the well.

²⁶²¹ Ex: Brunton, *Mostagedda*, 134, 188; NK Tomb 5302, in area associated with a 10-year-old child, blue glazed half-crouching feline looking aside (pl. LXXVIII.2).

²⁶²² Ex: UC1213; cf. Samson, Amarna, *City of Akhenaten and Nefertiti*, 77, pl.46(i) and UC58367.

Some instances depict a genet-like elongated body,²⁶²³ but the usual feline seems to have been the domestic cat.²⁶²⁴ However, since the domestic and the wild feline look very similar, it is unclear which type the artist meant to depict in most cases.²⁶²⁵

Feline-shaped seal-amulets emerged during the New Kingdom. The crouching feline depicted alone was a New Kingdom type, with most of them dating to the 18th Dynasty.²⁶²⁶ Seal amulets depicting a relaxing feline were extremely rare, with a metal prototype from the 17th Dynasty burial of Sobekemsaf in Edfu.²⁶²⁷ An interesting example of this type is one early 18th Dynasty specimen found from the village northeast of Harageh, where the bottom was incised with a papyrus thicket surrounding a high object on a hill,²⁶²⁸ which may be references to Hathor.²⁶²⁹ The bottom inscriptions typically referred to Amun-(Re) and Hathor. Scaraboids with the former came from sites such as Gurob,²⁶³⁰ Medinet Habu,²⁶³¹ and Deir el-Bahari.²⁶³² Those referring to Hathor include those from Medinet Habu,²⁶³³ Deir el-Bahari,²⁶³⁴ and Sedment.²⁶³⁵

Cat scaraboids also first occurred in the New Kingdom.²⁶³⁶ A couple of simple feline scaraboids, with the bottoms inscribed with the Hathor-head, occur in Tomb 60 in Gurob²⁶³⁷ and

²⁶²³ UC6211, UC62112.

²⁶²⁴ Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 260-1.

²⁶²⁵ Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 261.

²⁶²⁶ Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 251.

²⁶²⁷ BM EA 57699-700; Andrews, *Amulets*, 40, fig. 48b; Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 254.

²⁶²⁸ UC6401; Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 255.

²⁶²⁹ Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 263. For Hathor's connection to papyrus thickets and mountains, see above, § 2.3.

²⁶³⁰ Brunton and Engelbach, *Gurob*, 12, Tomb 60, pl. XXVI, no. 19-20; Thomas, *Gurob*, 75, pl. 30, no 601.

²⁶³¹ E. Teeter and T. G. Wilfong, *Scarabs, scaraboids, seals and seal impressions from Medinet Habu* (OIP 118; Chicago: Oriental Institute 2003), 107, pl. 50a, no 174, OIM 14924.

²⁶³² Berlin ÄM 9525: M. Stoof, *Ägyptische Siegelamulette in menschlicher und tierischer Gestalt: eine archäologische und motifgeschichte Studie* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1992), no. 1052.

²⁶³³ Teeter and Wilfong, *Scarabs*, 98-99, pl. 45d, no. 155, OIM 14925.

²⁶³⁴ MFA 06.2498; Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 252.

²⁶³⁵ UC61477; Petrie and Brunton, *Sedment*, 24, pl. LVII, no. 23.

²⁶³⁶ Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 255-7.

²⁶³⁷ Brunton and Engelbach, *Gurob*, 12, Tomb 60, pl. XXVI.16.

the Hathor Temple in Faras.²⁶³⁸ These objects, along with the seal-amulets with inscriptions referring to Hathor, indicate the feline's connection to Hathor. Those scaraboids depicting a feline with kittens are of particular interest for our purposes, since they may symbolize fertility/birth. The only examples of a cat lying on her belly among rows of kittens are unprovenanced.²⁶³⁹ An example of a scaraboid, showing a seated feline along with kittens, dates to the Second Intermediate Period.²⁶⁴⁰ Interestingly, the only pieces depicting standing felines among kittens all come from Amarna.²⁶⁴¹ Thus, the depiction of cats with young can occur in domestic contexts, which may indicate a daily-life function of these amulets.

On the wands, body markings could sometimes distinguish certain feline species: the caracal or desert lynx had neither spots nor stripes, and dark-tufted pointed ears; the serval had spotted to striped fur and a ringed tail.²⁶⁴² In some instances, an upright head was characteristic of the cheetah, particularly when paired with a spotted fur pattern, such as on Philadelphia UPM E 2914 (Figure 232).²⁶⁴³

²⁶³⁸ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 37-8, pl. 8, no. 35.

²⁶³⁹ F. S. Matouk, *Corpus du scarabée égyptien II. Analyse thématique* (Beirut: F.S. Matouk, 1977), nos. 633, no. 4522, 3885, and 4198; Louvre AE018442 (AF18442): Stoof, *Ägyptische Siegelamulette*, 255.

²⁶⁴⁰ UC 62280: Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 256.

²⁶⁴¹ UC23680a: Samson, *Amarna*, 77-78, fig. 46; UC1189: Samson, *Amarna*, 77-78, pl. 46 (i); UC62209-62210. Györy, "On the history of feline amulets, 256 dated them to NK, while Langton assumed a Late Period date.

²⁶⁴² Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 389.

²⁶⁴³ E. Castel, "Panthers, leopards and cheetahs. Notes on identification," *Trabajos de Egiptologia* 1 (2002): 22.



Figure 232 – Philadelphia UPM E 2914. Image from online museum catalogue, assessed 9/15/2017.

Cats also occurred on figurines mostly of faience, particularly of the late Middle Kingdom. The large group of faience figurines from the temple pro-cella deposits at Byblos (Figures 233-4) included one of a feral cat poised with head raised.²⁶⁴⁴ Likewise, Abydos tomb 416 produced two crouching cat figurines, poised to spring.²⁶⁴⁵ Excavators found a similar figurine from the 12th Dynasty from Heliopolis.²⁶⁴⁶ The 1924 report on Lisht MMA excavations published another example,²⁶⁴⁷ while the finds from the clearance of the town-site near Lahun included a head from a faience cat figurine.²⁶⁴⁸ From burial 378, where excavators found ivory wand MMA 22.1.65, a solid copper figure of small crouching feline with pointed ears appears to be a cat.²⁶⁴⁹ The dating of several faience feline figurines from Serabit el-Khadim, Sinai is

²⁶⁴⁴ Dunand, *Fouilles* II, pl. 103, no. 15228.

²⁶⁴⁵ Liverpool University E 160 (belly on ground) and another with belly off ground (present location unknown), Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 143-144 nos. 104 and 105, pl. 15.

²⁶⁴⁶ Hayes, *Scepter* I, 223-24, fig. 140; Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 143-4, pls. 15-16; Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 117, no. 108; Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos* II (1958), 750-1, no. 15228.

²⁶⁴⁷ Lansing, "Museum's Excavations at Lisht," 38, fig. 2 (first row, second from the right). Present location not cited.

²⁶⁴⁸ Manchester 166, both items cited in Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 144 and Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 390.

²⁶⁴⁹ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 390.

uncertain.²⁶⁵⁰ While Geraldine Pinch had noted the stylistic similarity of the Serabit el-Khadim figures with Middle Kingdom faience figurines, she had left open the possibility of a New Kingdom date, as late as the Ramesside Period.²⁶⁵¹ This strong association of the feline figurines with the Hathor temple of Serabit el-Khadim is further evidence for the connection of the animal with the goddess.



Figure 233 (left) – Cat figurine from Byblos, crouching. Image from Dunand, *Fouilles des Byblos* II, pl. ciii, no. 15228.

Figure 234 (right) – Lying Cat figurine from Byblos. Image from Dunand, *Fouilles des Byblos* II, pl. cvii, no. 15230.

A thin green-glazed "plaque" found near surface in square 16/18 at Byblos,²⁶⁵² perhaps from the side of a miniature steatite box,²⁶⁵³ illustrates in raised relief the figure of feline, possibly a cheetah, walking left to an upward branch-like plant motif.

While such depictions alone may not have distinguished the type of feline, other evidence indicates that any such figures pre-New Kingdom can only represent wild species.²⁶⁵⁴ All biological evidence currently indicates that the domestication of cats in ancient Egypt was a slow process which resulted in the domestic cat only by the New Kingdom. In the 12th Dynasty, the

²⁶⁵⁰ W. M. F. Petrie, *Researches in Sinai*, 148 with fig. 153.6-14 on facing plate.

²⁶⁵¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 184-185, discounting cheetah identification, and citing previous studies for lack of servals in Egypt before 18th Dynasty, but see now Wegner, "A decorated birth brick."

²⁶⁵² Dunand, *Fouilles* II, 80, no. 7229, pl. 142.

²⁶⁵³ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 391.

²⁶⁵⁴ Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 260.

larger illustrations of felines on cosmetic jars²⁶⁵⁵ and faience statuettes clearly represented a wild cat, alert and ready to spring at any moment.²⁶⁵⁶

Altenmüller had considered the feline on certain wands²⁶⁵⁷ to be a hybrid feline/mongoose creature, representing a tomcat ichneumon in the attitude of fighting against serpents.²⁶⁵⁸ In one spell from the Pyramid Texts, the claw of Atum rests on the vertebrae of the rebellious serpent demon.²⁶⁵⁹ Originally, the mongoose was only a healer of the sun god.²⁶⁶⁰ Another possibility is Mafdet, who occurred in the Pyramid Texts frequently contending against snakes.²⁶⁶¹ For other wands,²⁶⁶² Altenmüller had considered the feline to be a tomcat form of the sun god.²⁶⁶³ This deity appeared in BD 17 to destroy Apophis.²⁶⁶⁴ The feline form of Re also occurred in several memorial stones from Deir el-Medina in the New Kingdom.²⁶⁶⁵ Since, in one instance,²⁶⁶⁶ the cat motif wore a necklace as the goddess Bastet, it could also be a representation

²⁶⁵⁵ MMA 1990.59.1, without provenance, early 12 Dynasty: <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1990.59.1>; cf. also Do. Arnold, "An Egyptian Bestiary," *MMA Bulletin* 42.4 (1995): 21, no. 17): "The artist has combined the broad musculature and short tail of the swamp feline with the striped fur of *Felis silvestris*."

²⁶⁵⁶ Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 260.

²⁶⁵⁷ Liverpool, Publ. Mus.; G. Loud, *Megiddo II: Seasons of 1935-39*, (OIP 62; Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1948), 203.

²⁶⁵⁸ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 174-5.

²⁶⁵⁹ *PT* § 229.

²⁶⁶⁰ See E. Brunner-Traut, "Spitmaus und Ichneumon al Tiere des Sonnegottes," *Nachrichten von der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen: Philologisch-Historische Klasse* 7 (1965): 123-163.

²⁶⁶¹ *PT* 229, 230, 295, 297, and 298.

²⁶⁶² BM 18175, 24425; Louvre 1489; Brussels E 7065.

²⁶⁶³ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 175.

²⁶⁶⁴ E. Hornung, *Das Totenbuch der Ägypter* (Zürich; München: Artemis Verlag, 1979), Kap. 17, vers 192-195; C. Karlshausen, "Le chat dans la mythologie: les démons-chats," in *Les divins chats d'Égypte: un air subtil, un dangerux parfum*, ed. L. Delvaux and E. Warmenbol (Leuven: Peeters, 1991), 104-5; J.-P. Corteggiani, "La 'butte de la Décolation', à Héliopolis," *BIFAO* 95 (1995): 144-151; Altenmüller, "Zu den Feindbildern," 81, n.39-40.

²⁶⁶⁵ F. Servajean, "À propos d'une hirondelle et de quelques chats à Deir al-Médîna," *BIFAO* 102 (2002): 355-370.

²⁶⁶⁶ Kofler A 101.

of the goddess Bastet or another deity, who occurred in similar function as the "Great Cat" of Heliopolis.²⁶⁶⁷

Though the feline motive had continued use from the Old Kingdom on, the iconography shifted from the wild cat of apotropaia to the domestic animal of the New Kingdom. Györy had stated that, "a specialized fertility function can be determined only in the Third Intermediate Period," instead suggesting that the wild feline served as a general protector, supported by the frequent presence of *wꜥꜥt*-eye and Aha/Bes-figure amulets strung with the feline amulets.²⁶⁶⁸

While he had speculated that the feline seal-amulet depicting the papyrus thicket on the base may have related to the myth of Horus as a child,²⁶⁶⁹ there are too few pieces with context to be certain of this function. However, the material discussed above indicates an association of felines with Hathor. This relationship is especially clear in the Second Intermediate Period through New Kingdom, with the presence of amulet seals with inscriptions relating to the goddess, cat scaraboid at the Hathor Temple in Faras, and more than half of feline figurines from Serabit el-Khadim.²⁶⁷⁰ Furthermore, the mother-cat seal amulets from the New Kingdom onward and the context of some feline amulets in children's tombs may suggest a fertility role. The double sphinx featured similar connections to the sun god.

6.2.5 Double Sphinx

In the known magico-religious corpus of the Late Middle Kingdom, the motif of the double sphinx only occurred on the wands. However, mentions of the deities which tended to be represented in such a manner occurred in funerary literature dating back to the Pyramid Texts, and illustrations of the figure appeared in the Netherworld Books of the New Kingdom. There is

²⁶⁶⁷ Altenmüller, "Zu den Feindbildern," 81.

²⁶⁶⁸ Györy, "On the history of feline amulets," 263.

²⁶⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁷⁰ For the latter, see below, § 6.5.1, Table 28.

reason to suspect, therefore, that the double lion motif was an earlier manifestation of the figure from the Netherworld Books. His representation on apotropaia thus referenced his role in solar rebirth.

Wand BM 18175 (Figure 235) has an upward curve of the wand, curved at both ends, and has sections and two registers. This shape seems to represent the horizon, with the infant and deceased being the newborn sun.²⁶⁷¹ Figures included a recumbent lion and knife-wielding uraeus at each end, which represents *Rw.tl*.²⁶⁷² The figure also occurred on several other wands.²⁶⁷³

²⁶⁷¹ Roberson, “Netherworld iconography,” 439, n. 94: This supports Altenmüller’s suggestion (*Apotropaia* II, 50-1) that BM 18175 and the similarly oriented piece from Munich (unnumbered) may have been placed on the chest, beneath the head of the child or deceased, like a pectoral; in this position, the head would appear above the center of the wand, in the position of the solar disc on the horizon, directly comparable to the placement of the head in the curve of the headrest from the tomb of Tutankhamun.

²⁶⁷² Roberson, “Netherworld iconography,” 439, n. 96: The use of symmetrical animals as a motif relating to birth is attested in Egypt at least as far back as the Old Kingdom. H. Fischer, *Orientation of Hieroglyphs* (Egyptian Studies II; New York: MMA, 1977), 81-82, fig. 83, discusses such a scene from the sun temple at Abu Ghurob, in which two weasels stand opposite each other, tail to tail, with a symmetrical caption above reading: “giving birth to a weasel (by) a weasel.” Of particular note is the fact that the axis of symmetry for the text is the sign for “birth”, *ms*, which appears at the point directly above that at which the tails of the weasels meet, in the position occupied by the solar disc in the *ꜣh.t* sign.

²⁶⁷³ Cairo CG 9436, JE 56273; Florence MA 5079; MMA 22.1.79, 22.1.154a-b; Munich ÄS 2826; Ashmolean 1892.1159, 1942.90; UC16380, UC16382.

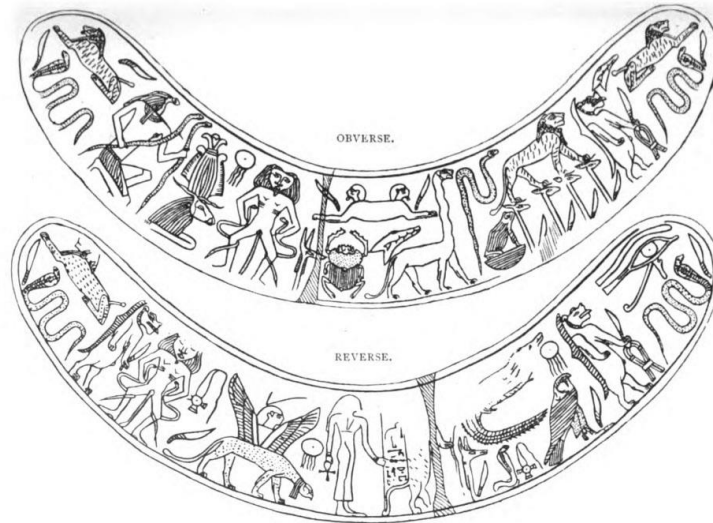


Figure 235 – BM 18175. Image from Legge, “Magic ivories,” (1906), fig. 3.

Funerary literature regarded *Rw.ti* as a singular entity,²⁶⁷⁴ whose name could have been transferred to the name of the sun god himself.²⁶⁷⁵ A double-lion deity, called *Rw.tj*, represented the sun god as early as the Pyramid Texts.²⁶⁷⁶ In PT 447, this god was a form of Shu and Tefnut,²⁶⁷⁷ and, then, of Atum himself: "You have your offering-bread, Oh Atum and *Rw.tj*, who yourselves created your godheads and your persons. Oh Shu and Tefnut, who made the gods, who begot the gods and who established the gods."

Both *Rw.tj* and Aker occurred in the Middle Kingdom. As a pair of lions, the former stood on equal footing with Re, Atum, and Khepri as a manifestation of the sun god.²⁶⁷⁸ In one spell from the Coffin Texts pertaining to resurrection, the deceased proclaimed: "I am (you are) *Rw*. I am (you are) *Rw.tj*."²⁶⁷⁹ Already during this period, *Rw.tj* was identified with the solar

²⁶⁷⁴ PT § 447; *Urk.* V, 86.

²⁶⁷⁵ *BD* Naville Ch. 41,1; 72,11; 130,22; 169,1.



²⁶⁷⁶ PT §§ 695-6; PT § 2081.

²⁶⁷⁷ Roberson, "Netherworld iconography," 439, note 101: Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, v. II, 50; J.R. Ogdon, "Some notes on the name and the iconography of the god Akr." *VA* 2.2 (1986): 131.

²⁶⁷⁸ Papyrus Leiden I 247, 8.5-6; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 172.

²⁶⁷⁹ CT I, 2; De Wit, *Rôle*, 124.

boat: "I come as *Rw.tj*, I leave the evening boat, I enter the boat of the morning".²⁶⁸⁰ Certain spells from the Coffin Texts use the word *ʒkr* to signify "earth."²⁶⁸¹ Aker not only served as a guardian, but synthesized the forces who revive the sun.²⁶⁸² In a hymn to Min from the Middle Kingdom, the text invoked the god as following: "O master of fear (which he inspires), the one who tames Aker."²⁶⁸³ The Coffin Texts also syncretized Aker with Re.²⁶⁸⁴

By the time of the New Kingdom Netherworld Books, the image of the double lion as two lions fused by their backs seems to have disappeared completely, replaced by the image of two lions seated back to back.²⁶⁸⁵ The lions bore over their backs various symbols closely related to solar theology:²⁶⁸⁶ a horizon with the solar disk  (or the latter alone), accompanied or not by the sky-sign  (whether straight or curved), the *ʕnh*-sign and other similar emblems, etc.²⁶⁸⁷ *Rw.tj* appeared linked to the sun god in some of the chapters of the Book of the Dead.²⁶⁸⁸ In another spell of the same text, *Rw.tj* and Atum were a sole deity: "Oh Atum, who raises himself as great god from the Primaeval Liquid, and who shines gloriously in the form of *Rw.tj*!"²⁶⁸⁹ The Amduat, Book of Caverns, and Book of the Earth illustrated Aker near the newborn scarab at the beginning of the day, with the latter two depicting the rejuvenated sun god only after an

²⁶⁸⁰ CT II, 139, 175; Kees, *Totenglauben*, 283; De Wit, *Rôle*, 138.

²⁶⁸¹ CT II, 28a (Spell 80); Ogdon, "Some notes," 128-129.

²⁶⁸² De Wit, *Rôle*, 103.

²⁶⁸³ Selim Hassan, *Hymnes religieux du Moyen Empire* (Cairo: IFAO, 1928), 155.

²⁶⁸⁴ B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus*, 244.

²⁶⁸⁵ Ogdon, "Some notes," 129-130.

²⁶⁸⁶ Ogdon, "Some notes," 130-131.

²⁶⁸⁷ See e.g., E. Terrace and H.G. Fischer, *Treasures of the Cairo Museum* (Boston: MFA, 1970), 154-5 (Papyrus JdÉ 14-7/35-6 of Hereubekhet, 20th Dyn.); A. Niwiński, "Noch Einmal über Zwei ewigkeitsbegreiffe. Ein Vorschlag der Graphischen Lösung in anlehnung an die Ikonographie der 21.Dynastie," *GM* 48 (1981): 53, Tafel 1 (Papyrus BM 10018 of Henttowy, 21st Dyn.); Bruyère, *Deir el Médineh (1924-1925)* (1926), 148 fig. 99 (Tomb of Neferabu); E. Dondelinger, *Jenseitsweg der Nofretari: Bilder aus dem Grab einer ägyptischen Königin* (Graz, 1977), pl. 3-4 (Tomb of QV 6t of Nofretary); etc.

²⁶⁸⁸ De Wit, *Rôle*, 138, notes 3-5; Ogdon, "Some notes," 131.

²⁶⁸⁹ Ogdon, "Some notes," 131, n. 15.

encounter with Aker.²⁶⁹⁰ While the text of BD 17 did not name the figure “Aker,”²⁶⁹¹ the representation of two opposite lions supporting the sky was in principle the same conception.²⁶⁹² On the basis of these representations, Roberson had argued that the upward and central location of the figure on wand BM 18175, at the midpoint of the solar journey, and its proximity to the scarab and ram figures means it was most likely Aker.²⁶⁹³ Aker helped destroy enemies of the sun god in a couple of passages from the Book of the Dead.²⁶⁹⁴ The sphinx-like aspect of Aker reappeared again in the Book of Caverns and the Book of What is in the Netherworld.²⁶⁹⁵

Except for the wands, Egyptians generally did not depict the double lion on private objects. Instead, the figure appears largely limited to funerary texts, particularly of the New Kingdom. This pattern of greater restriction during the New Kingdom was likely due to decorum, with the wands a temporary exception to the exclusively funerary nature of the double lion. Without wider birth, fertility, and/or sleep symbolism, the double lion did not appear relevant for the New Kingdom birth iconography, which became more distinct from the solar birth/rebirth imagery. A number of other apotropaic figures followed a similar trajectory.

6.2.6 Wrapped Cow

The motif of a seated cow wrapped in mummy wrappings occurred in the Middle Kingdom on wands and possibly the Abydos birth brick,²⁶⁹⁶ as well as a relief from the Old Kingdom. Several features identified the recumbent long-horned cow figure as a divine force:

²⁶⁹⁰ F. Bisson de la Roque, “Notes sur Aker,” *BIFAO* 30 (1931): 576, 580; De Wit, *Rôle*, 94; Roberson, “Netherworld iconography,” 440.

²⁶⁹¹ Naville, *Totenbuch*, Ch. 17.

²⁶⁹² De Wit, *Rôle*, 94.

²⁶⁹³ Roberson, “Netherworld iconography,” 440.

²⁶⁹⁴ Naville, *Todtenbuch*, Ch. 39, lines 6 and 12; Bisson de la Roque, “Notes sur Aker,” 577-578; De Wit, *Rôle*, 103.

²⁶⁹⁵ Ogdon, “Some notes,” 129, notes 8-9.

²⁶⁹⁶ See below, § 7.2.1.

body wrappings; shrine-shaped podium; sun-disk or double plum between horns.²⁶⁹⁷ Earlier, in the Old Kingdom, the procession to and from the double pavilion on the smaller *Sed*-festival reliefs of Neuserre depicted after two falcon standards a wrapped recumbent cow on a plain shaft, with plume between horns and flail at back.²⁶⁹⁸

By the figure of the wrapped cow, a wand found in the “House of the Mayor” (Figure 236) at Wah-Sut in Abydos South gave a hieroglyphic inscription which may be restored *ḥs[ʔt]*.²⁶⁹⁹ The only other secure instance of a motif named as a deity is the toad or frog as *ḥkt* on Copenhagen 7795 (Figure 35).²⁷⁰⁰ As discussed above, Hesat was a goddess of breast-feeding in at least one medical/magical spell from the Middle Kingdom.²⁷⁰¹ The offering formula on one late 12th Dynasty stela invoked Hesat as one of four goddesses with the sole epithet *ḥrt-ib ʔbdw* “amid Abydos”, the other being Heqet, the birth brick Meskhenet, and Renenutet.²⁷⁰² Some scholars had interpreted this epithet and the grouping in an offering formula as reflecting rituals of (re-)birth at Abydos, perhaps at specific moments of intervention by kingship.²⁷⁰³

Though she showed continuity from the Old Kingdom to the Middle Kingdom, the wrapped cow rarely appeared in the Netherworld Books of the New Kingdom and Third

²⁶⁹⁷ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 395.

²⁶⁹⁸ Berlin 14801: F. W. von Bissing, *Das Re-Heiligtum des Königs Ne-user-Re II: Die kleine Festdarstellung* (Berlin: A. Duncker, 1923), 4 no. 13; W. Kaiser, “Die kleine Hebseddarstellung im Sonnenheiligtum des Neuserre,” in *Aufsätze zum 70. Geburtstag von Herbert Ricke* [Beiträge zur ägyptischen Bauforschung und Altertumskunde 12], ed. A. M. Abubakr et al. (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1971), 93-98, pl. 4.

²⁶⁹⁹ Sohag store, South Abydos 1626, no. SA394a-b: Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. Aby1.

²⁷⁰⁰ Note also, the reading *in-ḥrt* proposed for the name on tusk Cairo JE 2007.04.58 for the griffin.

²⁷⁰¹ Ram. III B14-17. See above in § 5.2.4.4.1.

²⁷⁰² Copenhagen Aad. 13: W. Simpson, *The terrace of the great God at Abydos: the offering chapels of Dynasties 12 and 13* (New Haven: Peabody Museum of Natural History of Yale University, 1974), pl. 7, date after W. Grajetzki, *Die höchsten Beamten der ägyptischen Zentralverwaltung zur Zeit des Mittleren Reiches* (Achet 2; Berlin: Achet-Verlag, 2000), 120.

²⁷⁰³ Cf. J. Spiegel, *Die Götter von Abydos: Studien zum ägyptischen Synkretismus* (GOF 1; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1973), interpreting references to deities in Abydos offering chapel inscriptions as reflections of Abydene festival rites; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 396.

Intermediate Period. She occurred seated on a basket among animal-shaped divine images of the middle register of the 9th hour of the Amduat,²⁷⁰⁴ as well as on some 21st Dynasty variants of the vignette of the Book of the Dead 148.²⁷⁰⁵ This scarcity may be due to her more narrow role as a breast-feeding goddess, rendering her less necessary for funerary scenes than many other apotropaic figures. With the rise of Hathor in private contexts, she likely appropriate some of Hesat's wider roles, rendering the latter a more minor funerary breast-feeding goddess in private objects.



Figure 236 – South Abydos 1626, no. SA394a-b. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 2.23.

6.2.7 Vulture

The vulture motif appeared on carved wands across Egypt, at Thebes, Rifeh, Balansura and Lisht, and in both Nubia and Syria. In all except MMA 22.1.103, the figure held a knife at its feet facing forward diagonally.²⁷⁰⁶ None of the examples on magic wands bore any inscriptions identifying the image as a particular deity, but the *nh3h3*-flail at the back of several may indicate

²⁷⁰⁴ Hornung, *Das Amduat*, no. 669.

²⁷⁰⁵ A. Niwiński, "The so-called Chapters BD 141-142 and 148 on the Coffins of the 21st Dynasty from Thebes," in *Ausgestattet mit den Schriften des Thot. Festschrift für I. Munro* [SAT 14], ed. B. Backes et al. (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2009), 133-162.

²⁷⁰⁶ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 380.

that this was a goddess.²⁷⁰⁷ This flail occurred among the regalia placed with the mummified body of royal and some higher-status late Middle Kingdom burials.²⁷⁰⁸ There are a few possibilities as to the identity of this unnamed vulture deity. First, there is the protectress of kingship, named as Nekhbet, goddess of the collective shrine of Upper Egypt, with cult center at Nekheb (Elkab). During the 12th and 13th Dynasties, royal women with the title *mwt nswt* or *hmt nswt* wore a vulture headdress.²⁷⁰⁹ Another possibility is the goddess Mut, whose name derived from the Egyptian word for “mother,” written with a vulture. From at least the 13th Dynasty, Mut was attested as name of a goddess, most prominently in the surviving record at Thebes, but also at other sites including Megeb in the region of Qau.²⁷¹⁰ The writing of the vulture-with-flail and vulture occurred for both goddesses during this period, so it cannot be a diagnostic tool.²⁷¹¹ Unlike Nekhbet, Mut’s role is less known prior to the late Second Intermediate Period,²⁷¹² with her association with Amun-Re appearing only from the 17th Dynasty on.²⁷¹³ Given also the naming of one of the standing lions as Mut from wand Copenhagen NM 7795 (Figure 35),²⁷¹⁴ the vulture more likely represented Nekhbet. In either case, the vulture on the wands appears to have symbolized motherhood. However, this role appeared more related to the divine and royal spheres,²⁷¹⁵ so the vulture ceased in birth iconography of the New Kingdom.

²⁷⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁰⁸ Mace and Winlock, *Senebtisi*, 94-102, noting the particular association with Min, Osiris, kingship, and queenship, and interpreting accordingly as an attribute of reproductive power.

²⁷⁰⁹ S. Roth, *Die Königsmütter des Alten Ägypten von der Frühzeit bis zum Ende der 12. Dynastie* (AeUAT 46; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2001), 279-281.

²⁷¹⁰ A. Bolshakov, “Mut or not? On the meaning of a vulture on the Hermitage statue of Amenemhat III,” in *Servant of Mut: Studies in Honor of Richard A. Fazzini*, ed. S. D’Auria (PdÄ 28; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 23-31.

²⁷¹¹ Luiselli, “Early Mut(s),” 113-4, nn. 11-23.

²⁷¹² Luiselli, “Early Mut(s),” 117-20, 125-7; M. Bommas, “Annex: Occurrences of Mut in the Coffin Texts,” in Luiselli, “Early Mut(s),” 128-9.

²⁷¹³ Luiselli, “Early Mut(s),” 125.

²⁷¹⁴ See above, § 6.2.1.

²⁷¹⁵ Wilkinson, *Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 214.

6.2.8 Baboon

A seated or striding baboon, most often with *wꜥꜥt*-eye²⁷¹⁶ and/or torch,²⁷¹⁷ is among the more widespread apotropaic motifs. It occurred on wands,²⁷¹⁸ figurines,²⁷¹⁹ cubic rods,²⁷²⁰ amulets, and amulet molds. On two documented excavated examples (Figure 237),²⁷²¹ the baboon is at the start of the series of figures. The species shown on the wands are the maned *Papio hamadryas*.²⁷²² As a monkey, further Middle Kingdom appearances include a dwarf figurine and an unprovenanced paddle doll.²⁷²³



Figure 237 – Cairo JE 6155. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 2.16.

²⁷¹⁶ Cairo JE 6155; BM EA 38192; Moscow I, 1a 6736; Madrid MAN 16303; Berlin 14207; BM EA 24425; Baltimore WAM 71.510; Kofler A 100.

²⁷¹⁷ Ashmolean E2336; MMA 08.200.19; Manchester 1798; Copenhagen NM 12.113; Brussels MR E6361; Edinburgh NMS E1921.893.

²⁷¹⁸ Excavated examples: Manchester 1798 (Ramesseum), Cairo JE 6155 [= CG 9437] (Thebes), MMA 08.200.19 (Lisht), Ashmolean E 2336 (Abydos), Boston MFA 20.1566 (Kerma), Damascus NM 7021+7022 (Ugarit).

²⁷¹⁹ See § 6.5 below.

²⁷²⁰ See § 7.2.3 below.

²⁷²¹ Cairo JE 6155 and Cairo JE 88890.

²⁷²² Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 364.

²⁷²³ See above, § 3.1.1, Table 10 (Dunand 15318); § 3.2.1.1, n. 751.

Excavators found in the tombs at Harageh faience amulets in form of an elongated profile squatting animal, perhaps to be identified as a baboon.²⁷²⁴ Other examples occurred in tombs which contained wands, namely Abydos D79,²⁷²⁵ and from the less closely dated material from south of House A1 at Lisht North.²⁷²⁶ A string of beads from Rifeh includes one green faience crouched baboon.²⁷²⁷ As well as amulets, the baboon also occurred as an ivory figurine on top of palm capital, perhaps the upper part of a cosmetic container, found with a cylindrical amulet in the burial of an infant in Lahun.²⁷²⁸

Altenmüller had identified the baboon on the wands as representing Thoth.²⁷²⁹ As Lord of the Law, he would have promulgated justice on earth, ensuring victory over the enemies of the sun god.²⁷³⁰ He said,²⁷³¹ “I have come and I repeat to you the good. I bring to you Maat, I gladden your heart with that which pleases you. I have for you beaten (your enemies), I have for you beheaded (your enemies), I have for you cut down your enemies, I have for you punished your enemies, I have made your bloodbath.” Thoth also captured the *wdjꜣt* eye²⁷³² and destroyed enemies with sharp knives.²⁷³³ The image of the baboon with the *wdjꜣt*-eye (Figure 238) was particularly reminiscent of Thoth returning the solar eye, with a parallel from a spell from the

²⁷²⁴ Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. 50; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 366, Fig. 4.92. Cf. amethyst figurine of baboon with paws on knees, unprovenanced (BM EA 46713, Andrews, *Amulets*, 67, fig. 71).

²⁷²⁵ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Fig. 4.95.

²⁷²⁶ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 367. MMA 22.1.1944g taller, or shorter, perhaps more like the Harageh examples.

²⁷²⁷ UC38927. Accessed from museum online catalog 3/2017.

²⁷²⁸ Petrie, *IKG*, 6, pl. 14; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 366, Fig. 4.91.

²⁷²⁹ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 156-157.

²⁷³⁰ *CT* IV, 88; *CT* III, 327.

²⁷³¹ *CT* IV, 90i-m; see *CT* IV, 88e; VII, 371j-372a.

²⁷³² *CT* III, 343.

²⁷³³ H. Kees, “Zu den ägyptischen Mondsagen,” *ZÄS* 60 (1925): 2-5; *CT* I, 208b; III, 337, 338; VI, 155-156.

Book of the Dead.²⁷³⁴ He also destroyed enemies of the king and the sun god in the east.²⁷³⁵ The figure evoked the New Year return of the fertile flood (*wḏst*), coaxed back by Thoth (baboon) from the south.²⁷³⁶ As discussed above,²⁷³⁷ the god also occurred in a New Kingdom anti-miscarriage spell.



Figure 238 – BM 24425. Image from Legge, “Magic ivories,” (1906), fig. 2.

As a motive, the baboon does not appear to have been specific to birth and fertility, instead serving a protective function on apotropaia as part of the solar retinue. His use in private objects, such as amulets and figurines, continued in the New Kingdom.²⁷³⁸ Other possible

²⁷³⁴ BD 167: Hornung, *Das Totenbuch*, 340-341; see H. Junker, *Die Onurislegende* (DAWW 59.1-2; Vienna: A. Hölder, 1917), 157-158; M. Stadler, *Weiser und Wesir. Studien zu Vorkommen, Rolle und Wesen des Gottes Thot im ägyptischen Totenbuch*, (Orientalische Religionen in der Antike 1; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 246; Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," 17.

²⁷³⁵ R. Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien* II (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrich, 1904), 2c; Borchardt, *S'ahū-re* II, pl. 5, 8; *Urk.* I, 54; J. Černý, *The inscriptions of Sinai* II (MEES 45; London: EES, 1955), pl. I, 57-8.

²⁷³⁶ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 156, and for New Year associations 123-135 especially 130-131 on the lighting of torches, citing at n.7 Papyrus Ramesseum 17; Quack, "Animals of the desert," 341-361; Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," 17-18.


²⁷³⁷ See P. BM 10059, spell 25 in § 5.2.4.2.

²⁷³⁸ Ex: Stevens, *Private religion*, 40, 60-1, and 106-110.

references to Thoth occurred in two Wochenlaube ostraca scenes depicting monkeys.²⁷³⁹ However, the baboon did not feature as prominently in the New Kingdom birth iconography, possibly due to a concentration on birth-specific deities and greater decorum restrictions around the use of general solar-birth figures for regular childbirth magic.

6.2.9 Crocodile

Imagery of the crocodile during the Middle Kingdom occurred on wands, figurines, rods fragments, and other objects. While most appearances of this motif did not name the figure, it is relatively certain that the artists meant to represent the god Sobek. Given his association with procreation and vegetative fertility and connection with the sun god,²⁷⁴⁰ this attribution is logical.

The wands often depicted the crocodile in profile,²⁷⁴¹ with depictions of severed human heads being a relatively common subtype.²⁷⁴² Several represented the figure on a base²⁷⁴³ or holding a knife,²⁷⁴⁴ while more unique representations included the crocodile with the island-sign²⁷⁴⁵ and the crocodile in top-view.²⁷⁴⁶ In one interesting instance, the wand instead depicted a crocodile-headed human-bodied figure (Figure 239).²⁷⁴⁷ The only inscription on the wands for this motif occurred on Copenhagen 7795 (Figure 35), which has a  beside the crocodile. This

²⁷³⁹ See below, §7.4.1, Figures 300-301.

²⁷⁴⁰ M. Zecchi, "Sobek, the crocodile and women," *Studi di egittologia e di papirologia: rivista internazionale* 1 (2004): 149-153.

²⁷⁴¹ Ex: MMA 22.1.153, MMA 32.8.4, MMA 48.105.1, MMA.1.154a-b, Berlin 9611, Brussels MR E 2673, BM 18175, MMA 48.105.1, Copenhagen NM 7795, UC16387, Highclere H86.

²⁷⁴² Berlin 14284, Berlin 14207, Cairo 9435, UC16384, Ashmolean 1892.1159 (wood).

²⁷⁴³ Ex: Price Lot 883, Brooklyn 16.580.145, UC58601, BM 24425.

²⁷⁴⁴ Ex: Fitzwilliam 40/1926.

²⁷⁴⁵ Brussels MR E 7065.

²⁷⁴⁶ BM 20772.

²⁷⁴⁷ Ex-Cecil Collection: Legge, "Magic ivories," (1905), 145, pl. 14, fig. 23; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, Cat. no. 30; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. A1.

inscription was perhaps an intentionally incomplete writing of *m<sh>*,²⁷⁴⁸ “crocodile,” presumably to protecting the child/deceased from the crocodile coming fully alive.²⁷⁴⁹



Figure 239 – Wand formerly from Cecil collection. Image from Vink, “Boundaries of Protection Function,” fig. 20.

Besides the wands, figurines, and cubic rod segments, the crocodile motif occurred on several other objects of the Middle Kingdom to Second Intermediate Period. On the top of a limestone altar block in Hawara, five figures of crocodiles were sculpted.²⁷⁵⁰ Another crocodile occurred as a molded figure on rim of marl clay bowl from Rifeh tomb 61 (Figure 240), dating either to the Middle Kingdom or Second Intermediate Period;²⁷⁵¹ the rim bears at widely spaced intervals two other molded figures of animals, with waving parallel lines combed between: an elongated hippopotamus-lion and a calf. The appearance of both Taweret and Sobek on this bowl suggests a ritual use, perhaps pertaining to fertility or birth given their symbolism. Two gold

²⁷⁴⁸ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 383.

²⁷⁴⁹ Cf. the late Middle Kingdom strategy of “incomplete hieroglyphs”, G. Miniaci, “The Incomplete Hieroglyphs System at the End of the Middle Kingdom,” *RdE* 61 (2010): 113-134.

²⁷⁵⁰ I. Blom-Böer, *Die Tempel-Anlage Amenemhets III in Hawara. Das Labyrinth. Bestandsaufnahme und Auswertung der Architektur- und Inventarfragmente* (EgUit 20; Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2006), 129-132, cat. Nos. 21-25; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 383, Fig. 4.145.

²⁷⁵¹ Petrie, *Giza and Rifeh*, 14, pl. 11A; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 384.

plate schematic amulet figures from Harageh tomb 154 are identifiable as flat top-view crocodiles with tails curved to proper right.²⁷⁵² The crocodile also appeared on seal amulets.²⁷⁵³

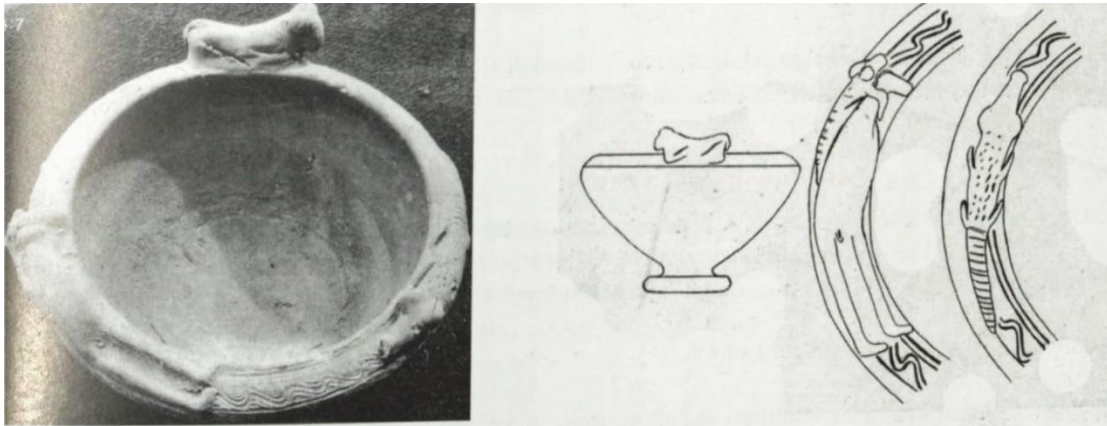


Figure 240 – Marl clay bowl from Rifeh tomb 61. Image from Petrie, *Gizeh and Rifeh*, pl. XIA.

The crocodile-headed human-bodied figure from one wand also occurred in statuary and relief. Several limestone statue fragments from the pyramid complex of Amenemhat III in Hawara depicted a crocodile-head, human male body, and a crown of horizontal ram horns and a double pair of falcon-feathers behind a sun disk with a rearing cobra.²⁷⁵⁴ The crocodile-headed human-bodied figure of Sobek "lord of Iumiteru" occurred on a door lintel for Senusret III from the temple of Mont in Medamud among regional deities flanking doorways and a *Sed*-pavilion.²⁷⁵⁵ On another relief, from the temple of Amenemhat III at Medinet Madi in the Fayoum, the crocodile-headed human-bodied figure of Sobek received offerings from the

²⁷⁵² Boston MFA 15.244-245: Engelbach, *Harageh*, 13, pl. 22; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 384-5, Fig. 4.148.

²⁷⁵³ Ex: Steatite cylinder-seal amulet, longitudinal crocodile with horizontal tail, alternating with hippo-lion, unprovenanced, date uncertain (Weingarten, *Transformation of Egyptian Taweret*, 5-6, n. 16; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 385.).

²⁷⁵⁴ Blom-Böer, *Die Tempel-Anlage*, 139-141 (Cat. Nos. 29-31 crown), 153-156 (Cat. Nos. 44-46 head/body), 156-7 (Cat. Nos. 47-48 head fragments from crocodile-headed human bodied or crocodile figures); T. Bagh, *Finds from W.M.F. Petrie's excavations in Egypt in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek* (Copenhagen: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, 2011), 107-112, noting *w3s*-scepter held to chest, suggesting perhaps *ḥnh* in other hand to side; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 386.

²⁷⁵⁵ F. Bisson de la Roque and J.-J. Clère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Médamoud* (1928) [FIFAO 6.1] (Cairo: IFAO, 1929), 48-49, figs. 36-37, blocks 71, 78; F. Bisson de la Roque, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Médamoud* (1930) [FIFAO 8.1] (Cairo: IFAO, 1931), pl. 8; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 386.

king.²⁷⁵⁶ The god thus had particular association with the Fayum in this period. Perhaps the wand with this human-bodied figure originated from the Fayum, perhaps used there during the owner's life.

From at least the Old Kingdom, Egyptians worshipped the crocodile god Sobek. He occurred in the Pyramid Texts, as son of Neith,²⁷⁵⁷ associated with procreation and vegetative fertility.²⁷⁵⁸ In the 12th Dynasty, Sobek increased in importance, primarily due to royal interest in the Fayum.²⁷⁵⁹ A number of spells from the Coffin Texts referred to this god.²⁷⁶⁰ In his fertility role,²⁷⁶¹ he was "One who eats with his mouth and copulates with his phallus,"²⁷⁶² "Lord of the seed,"²⁷⁶³ and can personify said seed himself.²⁷⁶⁴ During this period, Egyptians gave him new attributes and powers, such as an association with Horus and, resulting from being labelled as son of Osiris and Isis, a role in Osirian doctrine.²⁷⁶⁵ The crocodile in addition turned into a solar deity thanks to the syncretism Sobek-Ra.²⁷⁶⁶

The crocodile on apotropaia surfaced as a somewhat fertility-related solar figure. While he can occur in official settings, he also appeared on private objects, including figurines of the Middle and New Kingdoms.²⁷⁶⁷ New Kingdom materials, however, did not depict the crocodile

²⁷⁵⁶ M. Zecchi, *Sobek of Shedet. The crocodile god in the Fayyum in the Dynastic Period* (Todi: Tau, 2010), citing for publication of scenes E. Bresciani et al., *Medinet Madi. Venti anni di esplorazione archeologica 1984-2005* (Pisa: Università di Pisa, 2006), 22-41; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 386.

²⁷⁵⁷ PT 308 (§ 489), 416 (§ 510).

²⁷⁵⁸ PT 301 (§ 455), 306 (§ 480), 317 (§§ 507-510).

²⁷⁵⁹ Zecchi, "Sobek, the crocodile, and women," 149; Wilkinson, *Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 220.

²⁷⁶⁰ For references, see B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus*, 306 (*sbk.w*) and 307 (*ks*).

²⁷⁶¹ B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus*, 186.

²⁷⁶² PT § 310b and CT IV, 1f.

²⁷⁶³ PT § 510c.

²⁷⁶⁴ CT VII, 201f.

²⁷⁶⁵ Zecchi, "Sobek, the crocodile, and women," 149-150.

²⁷⁶⁶ On Sobek of Shedet, main god in Fayum, see M. Zecchi, *Geografia religiosa del Fayyum Dalle origini al IV secolo A.C.* (Imola, Italy: La Mandragora, 2001), 25-30, 37-50.

²⁷⁶⁷ For the Middle Kingdom, see below, §4.5.1. For the New Kingdom, see for ex. Weiss, *Religious Practice*, 358-9 (Cat. 10.27), 376 (Cat. 10.59); S. T. Smith, *Wretched Kush: Ethnic Identities and Boundaries in Egypt's Nubian Empire* (London: Routledge, 2003), fig. 5.32.B-D.

as part of the larger iconography of birth. The record thus indicates that Egyptians muted his fertility role during this period. This shift is perhaps due to the god not being specific to childbirth and daily-life human fertility, thus resulting in the motif inconsistent with the themes of New Kingdom birth imagery.

6.2.10 Turtle

Another recurrent motif on apotropaic objects is the turtle. It occurred on wands, a feeding cup, cuboid rod segments,²⁷⁶⁸ bed inlays, and amulets. Rather than as a purely protective figure, the turtle played the role as an enemy of the sun god, whose death ensured the (re)-birth of the latter.

The turtle appeared on a number of the wands.²⁷⁶⁹ Van de Walle had noted that artists usually carved the turtle at the end of the procession²⁷⁷⁰ or at the head.²⁷⁷¹ However, there are cases where it occupied the penultimate position instead,²⁷⁷² so it seems that space was a consideration in the location of the figure.²⁷⁷³ Ten of the wands depicted the animal with a realistic crisscross pattern,²⁷⁷⁴ while MMA 22.1.154 and the Megiddo wand illustrated a turtle with a stippled carapace and MFA 20.1780 (Figure 241) had the outline of the figure with rounded feet.²⁷⁷⁵ On wand Copenhagen NM 7795 (Figure 35), the hieroglyphic inscription beside the turtle gives the species name *štw*.²⁷⁷⁶

²⁷⁶⁸ See below, § 7.2.3.

²⁷⁶⁹ Berlin 8176; Brussels E 7063, E 7064, E 293; Cambridge FM 394/1932; Cairo CG 9437; Copenhagen NM 7795; BM 58796; Liverpool, Publ. Mus.; PAM(RM)>IAA 1948.1391; Munich 2825, 2962; MMA 19.2.18, 22.1.154; Louvre AF 6447 + Copenhagen NM 1314; Philadelphia E 12912; Manchester 1800.

²⁷⁷⁰ MMA 22.1.154, PAM(RM)>IAA 1948.1391, MMA 19.2.18, BM 58794, Cairo Cat. 9437.

²⁷⁷¹ Manchester 1800, Brussels E 293, Brussels E7064, MFA 20.1780.

²⁷⁷² Berlin 8176, Brussels E 7063, Louvre N. 1489.

²⁷⁷³ Fischer, *Turtles*, 32.

²⁷⁷⁴ MMA 19.2.18, Berlin 8176, Brussels E7063, Manchester 1800, Liverpool, Brussels E 293, BM 58794, Louvre N 1489, Cairo 9437, Brussels E7064.

²⁷⁷⁵ Fischer, *Turtles*, 30-1, 32.

²⁷⁷⁶ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 371.



Figure 241 - MFA 20.1780. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 2.75.

Similar apotropaic magic occurred on bed footboards,²⁷⁷⁷ with four ivory inlays depicting turtles.²⁷⁷⁸ Likewise, the turtle motif appeared on some amulets dating from the Middle Kingdom to the New Kingdom. Excavators found a couple of gold figure amulets, dating from the 12th to mid-13th Dynasty, from Haraga tomb 154.²⁷⁷⁹ Similarly, amethyst turtle amulets MMA 10.130.2399 and 10.130.2400 likely date to the Middle Kingdom to Second Intermediate Period.²⁷⁸⁰ Carnarvon and Carter had found a stone amulet they described as "brown stone turtle" at the center of a child's necklace from a Second Intermediate Period burial,²⁷⁸¹ with the context suggesting the amulet could hold a function related to children. Scholars have dated necklace BM 35114, consisting of carnelian amulets including a turtle, either to Middle Kingdom²⁷⁸² or the New Kingdom.²⁷⁸³ Carnelian turtle amulet Brooklyn 14.694 came from tomb 9 in Sawama,²⁷⁸⁴

²⁷⁷⁷ Fischer, *Turtles*, 34.

²⁷⁷⁸ Fischer, *Turtles*, 34, Cat. 98, fig. 22 with two of them; G. Reisner, *Excavations at Kerma Parts I-III* (HAS 5; Cambridge: Peabody Museum, 1923), 484 (Tumulus K XV, Chapel D, floor debris); Ibid., *Excavations at Kerma Parts IV-V* (HAS 6; Cambridge: Peabody Museum, 1923), 270 (no. 21) and pl. 56(1); W. S. Smith, *Ancient Egypt as represented in MFA, Boston*, 4th edition (Boston: MFA, 1960), 100-1, fig. 63-64.

²⁷⁷⁹ Boston MFA 15.246-247: Fischer, *Turtles*, 28, no. 54; Engelbach, *Harageh*, 13, pl. 22; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 371.

²⁷⁸⁰ Fischer, *Turtles*, 28, Cat. 56-57.

²⁷⁸¹ Carnarvon and Carter, *Five Years' Explorations*, 82 (62); Fischer, *Turtles*, 29, Cat. 67.

²⁷⁸² Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 371.

²⁷⁸³ Fischer, *Turtles*, 29, Cat. 65.

²⁷⁸⁴ Fischer, *Turtles*, 29, Cat. 66, see pl. 17.

which most likely dated to the early New Kingdom.²⁷⁸⁵ Presumably dating to the 18th Dynasty, one dark green faience amulet of a turtle came from the MMA 1910-1911 excavation at the Palace of Amenhotep III.²⁷⁸⁶

On these objects, the role of the turtle appears to have been as a potential menace to the sun god brought under control. Its perceived threat may have been due to its ability to swim on the bottom of the water and emerging on land only at night.²⁷⁸⁷ Indeed, excavators found turtle shells with offering tables for the mortuary cult in the Old Kingdom,²⁷⁸⁸ suggesting that the meaning of the turtle as an enemy that needs to be sacrificed dates already to this period.²⁷⁸⁹

Greater evidence of this role of the turtle appeared in the Middle Kingdom. In one spell from the Coffin Texts, CT 368, the deceased made the following divine threat: "If you say (the personification of excrement) that I (the deceased) should eat excrement, then Re will eat turtles."²⁷⁹⁰ This incantation was probably based on the mythical correlation of the drinking up of the water way of the sun god by the turtle and absence of Nile flooding.²⁷⁹¹ Altenmüller had linked this role with the turtle depicted right under the spout on feeding cup MMA 44.4.4 and on the wands, where they would have served to reactivate the mother's drying breast milk like the

²⁷⁸⁵ T. Whittemore, "The Sawama Cemeteries and the Ibis Cemetery at Abydos," *JEA* 1 (1914): 246-7 and G. A. Wainwright, *Balabish* (MEEF 37; London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd., 1920), v.

²⁷⁸⁶ Formerly MMA 11.215.197 (deaccessed in 1957); Fischer, *Turtles*, 29, Cat. 68, fig. 17, pl. 17.

²⁷⁸⁷ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 139; A. Brehm, *Tierleben: Allgemeine Kunde des Tierreichs. Die Lurche und Kriechtiere* I (Leipzig; Wien: Bibliographische Institut 1925), 497.

²⁷⁸⁸ Junker, *Giza VIII* (1947), 117; *Ibid.*, *Giza IX* (1953), 124.

²⁷⁸⁹ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 140; K. Sethe, *Dramatische Texte zu altägyptischen Mysterienspielen* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1928), 109ff.

²⁷⁹⁰ CT V, 30e-f; see CT IV, 66a, 67a; VI, 195g.

²⁷⁹¹ Van der Walle, "Tortue," 178-179; D. Topmann, *Die Abscheu-Sprüche der altägyptischen Sargtexte: Untersuchungen zu Textemen und Dialogstrukturen* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002), 77; Kees, *Totenglauben*, 200 with another interpretation.

Nile.²⁷⁹² Among the astronomical treatises which sometimes adorned the coffin lids of the Middle Kingdom, there is at least one mention of a constellation designated "the Tortoises."²⁷⁹³

The role of dark antagonist of the sun-god was more concretely formulated in the New Kingdom. Like Apophis, the turtle in the New Kingdom Netherworld Books threatened to drink up the waters on which the sun god needed to travel. These scenes included the formula "May Re live and may the turtle die."²⁷⁹⁴ Thus, her destruction was necessary "damit die Schildkröte nicht den Nil schlürfe und die Gewässer austrocknen."²⁷⁹⁵ Sarcophagi of the period often had the same formula.²⁷⁹⁶ In the tomb of Nebwenef in Thebes from the 19th Dynasty, a similar statement accompanied the image of the deceased harpooning a turtle, adjacent to a hippo hunting scene.²⁷⁹⁷ For both these scenes, the turtle and hippo formed barriers which must be eliminated before the solar barque can proceed.²⁷⁹⁸

While imagery of the turtle remained consistent, the symbolism altered from an ambiguous Middle Kingdom role to a more negative figure in the New Kingdom. During the former period, the turtle held a function related to water and perhaps breast milk, with the motif occurring in personal amulets. In general, the turtle was a figure specific to the sun god's nightly journey, rather than birth and fertility. That may explain why birth objects in the New Kingdom

²⁷⁹² Altenmüller, "Die Schildkröte," 21.

²⁷⁹³ A. Pogo, "Three Unpublished Calendars from Asyut," *Osiris* 1(1936): 500-509 (especially p. 509) and pl. 21 (vis-a-vis page 506): left extremity of the astronomical list decorated the interior lid of coffin Cairo JE 45064; Walle, "Tortue," 175, n.3.

²⁷⁹⁴ *Urk.* VI, 123.15; Naville, *Totenbuch* I, pl. CLXXXIV (Ch. 161).

²⁷⁹⁵ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 139-140; Altenmüller, "Die Schildkröte," 20-21"; Walle, "Tortue," 173ff.

²⁷⁹⁶ Walle, "Tortue," 180, nn. 1-2. For more examples see Petrie, *Qurneh*, 12, pl. 30.5, where the turtle determinative has a broken neck and *Wb* IV, Belegstellen to p. 557, no. 4; Figure 2 from Brunton and Englebach, *Gurob*, pl. 32.

²⁷⁹⁷ *PM* I² (1960), 268.18 (Tomb 157); Fischer, *Turtles*, 7, Fig. 3; T. Säve-Söderbergh, "Eine ramessideische Darstellung vom töten der Schildkröte," *MDAIK* 14 (1956): 175-180.

²⁷⁹⁸ Altenmüller, "Nilpferd und Papyrusdickicht," 9-21; Altenmüller, "Die Schildkröte," 17.

shifted away from the motive. The ambiguous nature of the turtle is quite similar to that of the snake, another common figure on apotropaia.

6.2.11 Snake

Snakes occurred quite frequently on the wands. As a separate figure or as a space-filler, the snake may have indicated that the wand imagery was set in the high desert.²⁷⁹⁹ There appear to have been two different types of snakes depicted on the wands: a regular snake,²⁸⁰⁰ sometimes paired,²⁸⁰¹ and a winding snake.²⁸⁰² The paired snakes seem to always have occurred as supplementary rather than independent motifs.²⁸⁰³ Variations of the regular snake included being on a basket,²⁸⁰⁴ perching on a standard,²⁸⁰⁵ and possessing three heads.²⁸⁰⁶ Interestingly, one clay wand from Edfu (Figure 242) contains the image of a giant snake, running the entire length, cut up with knives.²⁸⁰⁷ Two wands depict human-bodied figures with snake heads, one male²⁸⁰⁸ and one female.²⁸⁰⁹ It is not always clear to distinguish which snakes were enemies and which are protective deities, though larger snakes may be protective.²⁸¹⁰

²⁷⁹⁹ Altenmüller, “Zu den Feindbildern,” 77.

²⁸⁰⁰ Brussels M.R. E293; Florence M.A. 5079; BM 24426; MMA 32.8.3; MMA 32.1.231; MMA 15.3.951a-b; Louvre AF 6447+Copenhagen 1314; BM 20778; Florence M.A. 6883; Ashmolean 1942.90; Brussels M.R. E2673; Manchester 1801; Munich 2825; Berlin 14207; Moscow Pushkin 6736; Price Lot 883; Cairo CG 9433 (JE 34988); UC15917; Florence MA 2053; Kofler A100; Cairo CG 9434; Cairo CG 9439; Berlin 6709; UC16384; MFA 20.1780; Ashmolean E3953; MMA 15.5.197; Newberry VI.II; MFA 21.1519; Ashmolean 1892.1159.

²⁸⁰¹ UC16379; UC16385; Louvre 1489; Louvre AF6447+ Copenhagen 1314; MMA 22.1.79; Ashmolean 1885.248; Manchester 1800; MMA 19.2.18; BM 24425; Cairo CG 9438a-b; Cairo CG 9434; MFA 47.2185.

²⁸⁰² Berlin 14027; Brussels E 2673, E 7065; Cambridge FM 394/1932; Cairo 9439; BM 18175, 24425; UC OdU 37/14; MMA 15.3.167, 15.5.197, 19.2.18, 22.1.103; Ashmolean 1942.90, E 2224; Philadelphia E 12912; Price Lot 883.

²⁸⁰³ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 373.

²⁸⁰⁴ Florence MA 5076.

²⁸⁰⁵ Brussels MR E292.

²⁸⁰⁶ Manchester 1799.

²⁸⁰⁷ Cairo JE 68773; Michalowski et al., *Tell Edfou* 1938, 120, no. 600, Taf. 40.3.

²⁸⁰⁸ UC16383.

²⁸⁰⁹ Moscow Pushkin 6736.

²⁸¹⁰ Altenmüller, “Zu den Feindbildern,” 76. See below, § 6.2.12.



Figure 242 – Cairo JE 68773, from Edfu. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 2.106.

There were rather few figurines of the snake. Only two occurred in faience, with the sole example with context found in Lisht North.²⁸¹¹ The Middle Kingdom Haraga corpus had no carnelian snake-head amulets of New Kingdom type.²⁸¹² These New Kingdom snake-head amulets, with inscriptions to invoke the eye or uraeus of the sun god, name the deceased, or recite spell 34 of the Book of the Dead, and appeared protective against snakes.²⁸¹³

Snakes were the most commonly depicted of all the enemies of the sun god.²⁸¹⁴ Altenmüller had considered almost all the beings depicted on the wands, often with a knife, as foes of the snake.²⁸¹⁵ For Egyptians, the snake was an animal which does not have a mother in mythology,²⁸¹⁶ with its father considered the earth²⁸¹⁷ from which it springs out to attack.

²⁸¹¹ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 373; Fitzwilliam Museum E.377.1954 (unprovenanced, head and upper neck only); Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 117, no. 107; Lisht North: Hayes, *Scepter I*, 227.

²⁸¹² Engelbach, *Harageh*, pl. 49-51.

²⁸¹³ B. Letellier and C. Ziegler, *Le Louvre présente au Muséum de Lyon les animaux dans L'Égypte ancienne: exposition du 6 novembre au 31 janvier 1978* (Lyon: Muséum du Lyon, 1977), 62; Andrews, *Amulets*, 85.

²⁸¹⁴ Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia I*, 136-137; H. Altenmüller, "Ein Zaubermesser aus Tübingen," *WO* 14 (1983): 38-39. For example, see *rrk* in B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus*, 305.

²⁸¹⁵ Altenmüller, "Zu den Feindbildern," 77.

²⁸¹⁶ Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia I*, 137.

²⁸¹⁷ *Wb.* III, 410: *z3-t3*; *s3-t3* in Hannig, *Äg. Wb.* I, 1051 and *ibid.*, II, 2075. Geb as father of the snake.

Starting in the Old Kingdom, snakes occurred as threats in in the Pyramid Texts,²⁸¹⁸ as well as in texts concerning the protection of the house.²⁸¹⁹ In the former, there were defenses against poisonous snakes to protect the buried king: "Heki-snake, Heke and Snake! Go now, while your face is directed toward the road. Eye of the Unas, do not look at them!"²⁸²⁰ Other spells from the Pyramid Texts discussed snakes in reference to various places in daily life: desert and bush, river and water-channel, as well as the house, front door and walls.²⁸²¹ One spell, for example, read, "Ejection of the wall, ejection of the brick (= the serpent); What is coming out of your mouth is thrown against you."²⁸²² However, the snake during this period also served an apotropaic function,²⁸²³ such as a text against grave robbers on the doorstep of a private mid-4th Dynasty private tomb, which read, "The crocodile was against him in the water, the Snake against him on the earth!"²⁸²⁴ This apotropaic function would continue with the apotropaia and the New Kingdom anti-nightmare cobra figurines.

Snakes continued to serve primarily as threats during the Middle and New Kingdoms. Notable here is a spell for the "protection of the body,"²⁸²⁵ which paid special attention to warding off snakes. Altenmüller had argued that the winding snake that appeared on number of wands represented the main foe of the sun-god, Apophis.²⁸²⁶ Apophis first emerged as an enemy

²⁸¹⁸ PT Sp. 226 (§ 226b), PT Sp. 242 (§ 247b), PT Sp. 298 (§ 442b), PT Sp. 388 (§ 681a), and Louvre E 25485. For more detail, see Theis, *Magie und Raum*, 794.

²⁸¹⁹ pRamesseum IX, 2,1; pEbers 842-844 (97,17-20); Cairo JdÉ 69771, VII. For more detail and later texts, see Theis, *Magie und Raum*, 794.

²⁸²⁰ PT Sp. 429a-b.

²⁸²¹ E. Lange, "Gebändigte Macht: Tiere in der altägyptischen Magie," in *Ägypten: ein Tempel der Tiere: Begleitbuch zur gleichnamigen Ausstellung im Zoologischen Garten Berlin*, ed. V. Vaelke et al. (Berlin: Achet, 2006), 100.

²⁸²² PT Sp. 241 (§ 46a-b).

²⁸²³ Lange, "Gebändigte Macht," 102.]

²⁸²⁴ *Urk.* I 23, 12-13.

²⁸²⁵ pRam.X 1.1-2.2 = pRam.XVI, 8.1-7; H. Altenmüller, "Ein Zauberspruch zum 'Schutz des Leibes'," *GM* 33 (1979): 7-12 with later variants.

²⁸²⁶ Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia* I, 138.

of the sun god in Coffin Texts of the Middle Kingdom,²⁸²⁷ so that attribution is probable. Likewise, the large snake impaled with knives on wand Cairo JE 68773 could have represented the earliest image of the gods enemy Apophis as a giant snake.²⁸²⁸ In addition to Apophis, Egyptians represented the four primordial gods in the Hermopolitan tradition, Nun “primordial waters”, Heh “infinity in space”, the “darkness” Keku, and “disappearance” Tenemu,²⁸²⁹ as snakes, and various texts discuss the struggle of the sun god against these four.²⁸³⁰ One of the key texts, from the 19th Dynasty, called to the god “Re, which (saved) himself before the four (enemies), who acted against him in *hr-wr*, (along with) the enemy, which is in the north of Hermopolis (*Wnw*).”²⁸³¹ Despite all this negative association, Egyptians also admired the snake for its ability to seeming rejuvenate via molting.²⁸³² For example, one spell from the Book of the Dead, “Transformation into a snake,” sought to transform the deceased into that animal, reading, “I am a serpent, far in years, spending the night and being reborn every day. I am reborn, I am rejuvenated every day.”²⁸³³

Given their non-birth-specific apotropaic function, most snakes on the apotropaia phased out of the birth iconography of the New Kingdom. Depiction of Apophis likewise became restricted to the funerary realm in the New Kingdom, similar to a number of the solar rebirth motifs on apotropaia. In contrast, the rearing cobra with swollen neck had more fertility-specific use, so the deity represented continued into the New Kingdom birth imagery.

²⁸²⁷ CT V, 244ff. (Spell 414). For other references, see B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus*, 307 under *k3 wr* and *k3 n sdh*.

²⁸²⁸ Altenmüller, "Zu den Feindbildern," 76.

²⁸²⁹ CT II, Spell 76; K. Sethe, *Amun und die acht Urgötter von Hermopolis: eine Untersuchung über Ursprung und Wesen des ägyptischen Götterkonigs* (Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1929), 74-78, §145-154.

²⁸³⁰ Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia* I, 137-138.

²⁸³¹ Pleyte and Rossi, *Papyrus de Turin*, pl. 118.11.

²⁸³² Lange, "Gebändigte Macht," 103.

²⁸³³ BD Spell 87.

6.2.12 Rearing Cobra with Swollen Neck

The rearing cobra occurs several times on magic wands, either as a full cobra²⁸³⁴ or as a sometimes human-headed cobra with wings (Figure 243).²⁸³⁵ In several cases, the cobra appeared with the *wḏst*-eye.²⁸³⁶ While Altenmüller had dated most of the examples of the erect cobra to his middle typological stage,²⁸³⁷ around 1750 BC, the new dating suggested by Quirke puts this assessment into doubt.²⁸³⁸ These larger snakes, whose body are reproduced in detail, are presumably in most cases protective deities. However, it is uncertain because there are not corresponding texts.²⁸³⁹

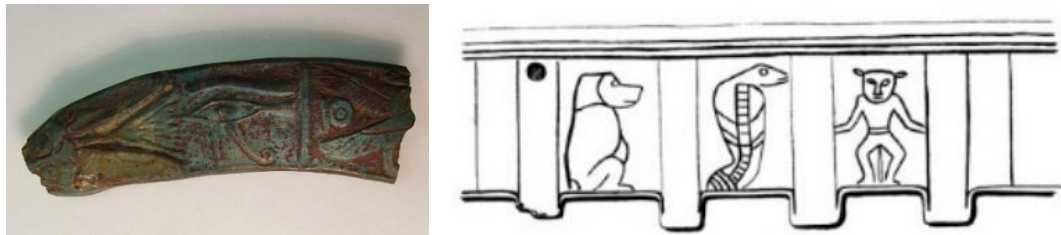


Figure 243 (left) - BM 34214. Image accessed from online museum catalogue 7/15/2018.

Figure 244 (right) – Box from Abydos, Tomb E3. Image from Garstang, *El Arábah*, pl. 9.

The full cobra occurred on a diadem, hairpins, decoration of a kohl vase, a sword, amulets, and seal impressions.²⁸⁴⁰ As will be discussed below, it may appear on the Abydos birth brick.²⁸⁴¹ The ivory box from Abydos Tomb E3 (Figure 244), in addition to an Aha-image, also

²⁸³⁴ Boston MFA 20.1780; Cambridge 394/1932; BM 18175; Moscow 6736; Louvre E 3614 +MMA 26.7.1288 A-B. Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Motif 23.

²⁸³⁵ With human head and wings: Fitzwilliam 205/1900; OdU 36/11; MMA 15.3.197; MMA 22.1.153; with human head without wings: MMA 15.3.197; MMA 22.1.103. Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Motif 24.

²⁸³⁶ Baltimore WAG 71.510; BM 18175; Louvre E 3614+MMA 26.7.1288; Freiburg Ä 1998.1. H. Altenmüller, "Schutzdämonen für Geburt und Wiedergeburt: Ein Zaubermesser," in *In ägyptischer Gesellschaft: Aegyptiaca der Sammlungen Bibel+Orient an der Universität Freiburg Schweiz*, ed. S. Bickel (Freiburg Schweiz, 2004), 61.

²⁸³⁷ Altenmüller, "Schutzdämonen," 61.

²⁸³⁸ See below, § 6.3.1.

²⁸³⁹ Altenmüller, "Zu den Feindbildern," 76.

²⁸⁴⁰ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 376-8.

²⁸⁴¹ See § 7.2.1.

had a compartment incised with the figure of a cobra.²⁸⁴² In the New Kingdom, cobra amulets provided general protection, while clay figurines protected against nightmares.²⁸⁴³ The only contemporary parallels with the human-headed cobra are two quartzite pedestals, each with two registers of such rearing cobras wearing the *nemes*-headcloth and a beard with horizontal lower edge.²⁸⁴⁴

This cobra deity appears to have been Renenutet, since New Kingdom representations often represented her as a cobra,²⁸⁴⁵ sometimes with a human head.²⁸⁴⁶ Primarily a grain-goddess,²⁸⁴⁷ her relationship with birth-brick goddess Meskhenet²⁸⁴⁸ indicates that she also had a fertility function as well.²⁸⁴⁹ As will be discussed below, she may have also occurred alongside the beds in New Kingdom Wochenlaube scenes, as well as woman-on-bed figurines.²⁸⁵⁰ In these later depictions, she is a red flat snake, which likely was a space-saving design, since she occurred at the sides of the bed or beside the woman.

6.2.13 Jackal-Head on Leg/Staff

The jackal-head on leg(s)/staff is one of the less known of the apotropaic motifs. From the Middle Kingdom, the image occurs on wands and a few other objects. The identity and

²⁸⁴² Garstang, *El Arábah*, 5, 8, 25-26, pl. 1, 11, 14; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 378, Fig. 4.127. For description of Aha-figure from the box, see above, §3.2.1, p.139.

²⁸⁴³ R. Ritner, "O. Gardiner 363: A spell against night terrors," *JARCE* 27 (1990): 25-41; Ibid., *Mechanics of ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 224, n. 1042; K. Szpakowska, "Playing with fire: Initial observations on the religious uses of clay cobras from Amarna," *JARCE* 90 (2003): 113-22; Stevens, *Private religion*, 50-1, 100-3.

²⁸⁴⁴ Egyptian Museum Cairo JE 42906; among block from area of Coptic Museum (L. Habachi, "New light on objects of unknown provenance (I). A strange monument of Amenemhat IV and a similar uninscribed one," *GM* 26 (1977): 27-33; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 378).

²⁸⁴⁵ J. Broekhuis, *De godin Renenwetet* (Assen: Van Gorcum and Comp., 1971), 11-31.

²⁸⁴⁶ Hague Museum Inv. No. 47 and Florence Inv.1588: Broekhuis, *Renenwetet*, 31-32, pl. 8.

²⁸⁴⁷ F. Mougenot, "Renenoutet et les etoffes: Deesse de la vegetation ou garienne des tresors?" *ENiM* 7 (2014): 145-172.

²⁸⁴⁸ Broekhuis, *Renenwetet*, 88-90.

²⁸⁴⁹ Contra P. Marini, "Renenutet: Worship and Popular Piety at Thebes in the New Kingdom," *Journal of Intercultural and Interdisciplinary Archaeology* 2 (2015): 73.

²⁸⁵⁰ See §§ 7.4.1 and 3.2.6.

function of the figure becomes clearer in representations from the 21st Dynasty and Late Period, as well as textual evidence.


One of the most common motifs from the apotropaic wands is the jackal-head wearing a wig, which supports itself either on two human legs²⁸⁵¹ or a single leg or staff (Figure 245).²⁸⁵² The jackal-head on a single leg possibly manifested or personified the hieroglyph Gardiner F12 ²⁸⁵³ Interestingly, a number of wands on which the motif appears also depicted the sun-disk on legs image.²⁸⁵⁴ In several cases, the figure holds a snake in its mouth,²⁸⁵⁵ while most only wield a knife. One of the wands depicted the motif holding a knife on top of the *s3*-sign.²⁸⁵⁶



Figure 245 – Garstang E 7007. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 2.36.

²⁸⁵¹ Ex: Cairo JE 31046, MMA 08.200.19, Philadelphia E 2914; A. Shorter, "A Magical Ivory," *JEA* 18 (1932): 1-2, pl. I; Capel and Markoe, *Mistress of the House*, no. 12.

²⁸⁵² Excavated examples Liverpool GM E7007; Cairo JE 2007.04.58; Manchester 1799; MMA 22.1.153; MMA 15.5.124; MMA 15.3.167a-c; MMA 22.1.103; Tübingen 1845; MMA 32.1.231; Liverpool WM 16.11.06.304; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. A1 (Legge, "Magic ivories," (1905), 145, pl. 14, fig. 23; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 30); Manchester 1801; MMA 48.105.1.

²⁸⁵³ Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 149.

²⁸⁵⁴ Ex: Baltimore WAG 71.510; Berlin 12611, BM AE 17078, 18175, 58796, 65439; Brooklyn 16.580.145; Cairo CG 9435, JE 6155; Florence MA 6883; ? + Liverpool 16.11.06.304; Louvre E3614 + MMA 26.7.1288; Manchester 1801; MMA 22.1.103, 22.1.105, 22.1.153, 30.8.218; Ashmolean 1885/248.

²⁸⁵⁵ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 53 (Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 89); UC16536; Leipzig ÄM 5001A+B.

²⁸⁵⁶ Cairo JE 2007.04.58.

In addition to the wands, a few objects from funerary contexts of the late Middle Kingdom also bore the image. Excavators found gold collar elements depicting the figure, inlaid with precious stones, from the tomb of king's daughter Khnumet in Dahshur.²⁸⁵⁷ The Carter and Carnarvon excavations found a board-game with palm motif containing several jackal-headed sticks as gaming-pieces from Asasif C37 tomb 25.²⁸⁵⁸

Only in the late representations does the purpose of the jackal-head motif become clear. On the right side of a 21st Dynasty coffin box in Turin (Figure 246),²⁸⁵⁹ the jackal-headed figure on two legs appeared with a caption enumerating its divine epithets (*nṯr ʿ3 iṯ tꜣw ḥnty dwꜣt* "Great God, Who Seizes the Wind, Foremost of the Duat"), in the company of a goddess (titled as *nṯrt ʿ3t* "Great Goddess") who has a cobra on her shoulder. The latter figure, as part of a group of twelve goddesses of similar iconography, occurred earlier on the upper register of the 12th hour of the Amduat.²⁸⁶⁰ A similar jackal-headed figure appeared on a Late Period magical papyrus held at the Louvre (Figure 247), introducing the hieratic text.²⁸⁶¹ Since the text concerned the magical protection by a mother to her son, the figure likely fulfilled an apotropaic role.²⁸⁶² The text identifies the child with "the great god who resides in the *ḥwt-Mskt* and merges from the Nun."²⁸⁶³

²⁸⁵⁷ de Morgan, *Fouilles à Dahchour 1984-1985*, pl. 5, no. 42, clearly animal leg with wigged jackal-head; Aldred, *Jewels*, pl. 30; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Fig. 4.54; Quirke, "Figuring migrations," 364.

²⁸⁵⁸ MMA 26.7.1287: Carnarvon and Carter, *Five Years' Explorations*, 56-59, pl. L; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 250, fig. 160; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Part 2, 349; fig. 4.55.

²⁸⁵⁹ Inv. 7715; CGT 10108.B: A. Niwiński, "The 21st Dynasty religious iconography exemplified by the scene with three deities standing on a serpent," in *Akten des Vierten Internationalen Ägyptologen Kongresses München 1985*, ed. S. Schoske (BSAK 3, 1988), 306-307; Ibid., *Sacofagi della XXI Dinastia (CGT 10101-10122)* [Catalogo del Museo Egizio di Torino, Serie seconda - collezioni Vol. IX] (Torino: Misistero per I Beni e le Attività Culturali - Soprintendenza al Museo delle Antichità Egizie, 2004), 77, fig. 147 and Tav. XV.2; Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," Fig. 2.

²⁸⁶⁰ Hornung, *Das Amduat*, 195; II, 186-197 [Nos 822-833].

²⁸⁶¹ Inv. No. 3233a-b: J.-C. Goyon, "Un phylactère tardif: le papyrus 3233A et B du Musée du Louvre," *BIFAO* 77 (1977): 45-54; Niwiński, "The 21st Dynasty religious iconography," 306-307; Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," Figs. 3-4.

²⁸⁶² Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 151.

²⁸⁶³ Goyon, "Un phylactère tardif," 49-50.

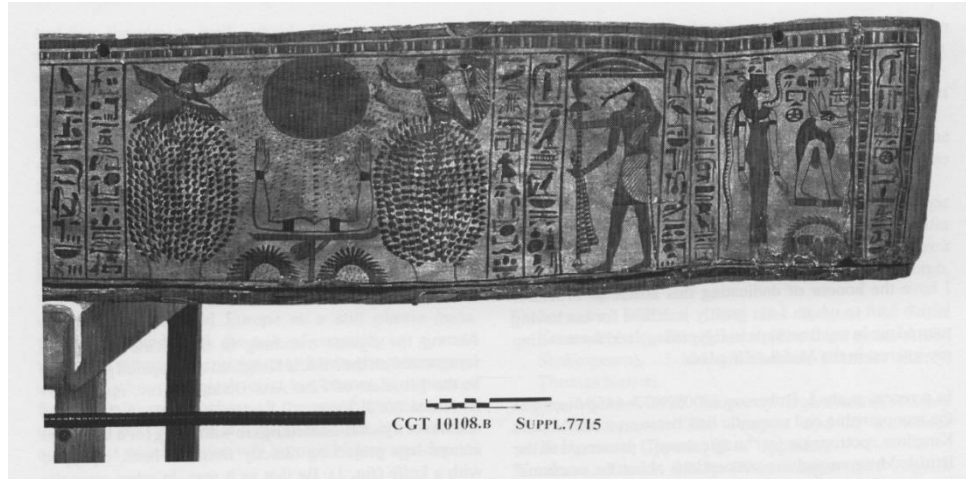


Figure 246 – Coffin Turin Inv. 7715; CGT 10108.B. Image from Liptay, “From Middle Kingdom,” Fig. 2.

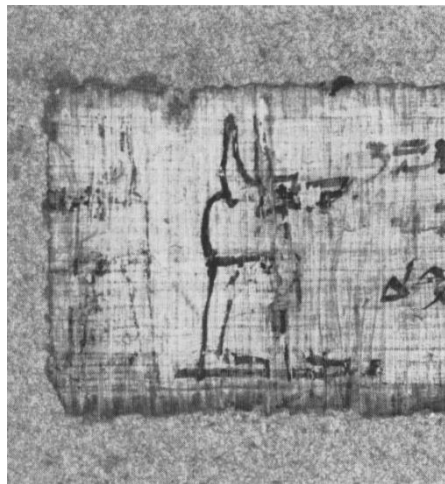


Figure 247 – Louvre Inv. No. 3233a-b. Image from Liptay, “From Middle Kingdom,” Fig. 4.

There are several theories concerning the identity of the jackal-head on leg(s)/staff: one of the *h3tyw*-demons, Re-Atum, and/or Anubis. Each of these possibilities has textual and iconographical support. Given how relatively common syncretism occurred in Egyptian

religion,²⁸⁶⁴ it is likely that the jackal-headed figure could have inhabited all three of these identities.

The *ḥꜣtyw* demons,²⁸⁶⁵ who served as messengers between the divine and human realms, typically wielded knives like many representations of the jackal-headed motif. As Liptay had noted,²⁸⁶⁶ the walking legs of the jackal-headed figure would be an appropriate feature for a *ḥꜣtyw*-demon, whose most important ability was its mobility. Furthermore, the Litany of Re, dating to the New Kingdom, stated that the *ḥꜣtyw*-demons belonged to the solar entourage and assist him in defeating Apophis.²⁸⁶⁷

The case for the jackal-headed figure representing Re-Atum rests on its occurrence in the Late Period Louvre magical papyrus along with the titles, "the great god who resides in the *ḥwt-Mskt* and merges from the Nun."²⁸⁶⁸ In a parallel text in the Metternich stela,²⁸⁶⁹ Re-Atum held these titles. The location *Mskt* in the latter text was a cosmic area near to the entrance and exit of the Netherworld,²⁸⁷⁰ on the eastern horizon where the sun god joined the corpse of Osiris during

²⁸⁶⁴ See, ex: E. Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many* [translated by J. Baines] (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 91-99, 235-6.

²⁸⁶⁵ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, 143-145; M. Bommas, *Die Mythisierung der Zeit. Die beiden Bücher über die altägyptischen Schalttage des magischen pLeiden I 346* [GOF IV/37] (Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 1999), 35-36; or *šmꜣyw* (cf. CT V 136b ["*šmꜣw* which are in the Abyss"]; J. Vandier, *Le papyrus Jumilhac* (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1961), 130 and 203 [XVIII, 7]; D. van der Plas and J.F. Borghouts, *CT Word Index* [Publications interuniversitaires de recherches égyptologiques informatisées VI] (Utrecht - Paris: CCER, Utrecht University, 1998), 279; R. van der Molen, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts* (PdÄ 15; Leiden, Boston and Köln: Brill, 2000), 618.

²⁸⁶⁶ Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 152.

²⁸⁶⁷ E. Hornung, *Das Buch der Anbetung des Re im Westen (Sonnenlitanei)*, II [AegHelv 2-3] (Geneva: Ägyptologisches Seminar des Universität Basel and Centre d'études orientales de l'Université de Genève, 1976), 146-7.

²⁸⁶⁸ Goyon, "Un phylactère tardif," 52; cf. BD 17: Naville, *Das Ägyptische Totenbuch*, pl. XXVI [96]; Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 151.

²⁸⁶⁹ VII, 6: Goyon, "Un phylactère tardif," 52.

²⁸⁷⁰ CT VII 2j; Leitz, *Lexikon* III, 442.

his nocturnal journey.²⁸⁷¹ This location also would coincide with the jackal-headed figure's appearance on the Turin with a goddess from the 12th Hour of the Amduat.²⁸⁷²

Another possible identity for the jackal-headed figure is as the jackal-headed god Anubis in his role of facilitating the return of the solar eye.²⁸⁷³ As mentioned above, a number of wands on which the motif appeared also illustrated a sun-disk on legs. These representations may have been abbreviations of a scene on one wand held in Berlin,²⁸⁷⁴ which showed Anubis with a human body and jackal head in front of the solar eye, here manifested by a mummified lion deity.²⁸⁷⁵ A similar scene, this time with a mummified jackal-headed figure in front of the solar disk with legs, occurred in another wand.²⁸⁷⁶ This god also resuscitated the deceased with his breath, since an offering formula from the tomb of Ramose (TT 166) gave him the title *dd t3w n nty m db3t* "he who gives breath to the person who is in the coffin."²⁸⁷⁷ Given this context, it is significant that the third scene from the Turin box depicted a vignette from *BD* Chapter 161,²⁸⁷⁸ which aimed to open the four gates of the sky for the deceased to breathe via control over the four winds.²⁸⁷⁹ Thus, the scene clarified the title *it t3w* "he who takes possession of winds/breath" accorded to the

²⁸⁷¹ H. Willems, *The Coffin of Heqata (Cairo JdE 36418)* (OLA 70; Leuven: Peeters, 1996), 262-270; Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 151.

²⁸⁷² Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 150.

²⁸⁷³ Altenmüller, "Anubis mit der Scheibe," 15-35; Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," 17.

²⁸⁷⁴ Berlin ÄM 14207: Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," Doc. 16, Abb. 1; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 10; Legge, "Magic ivories," (1905), 136ff., pl. 4, fig.4.

²⁸⁷⁵ Altenmüller, "Der rettende Greif," 17.

²⁸⁷⁶ MFA 03.1703.

²⁸⁷⁷ E. Hofmann and K.-J. Seyfried, "Bemerkungen zum Grab des Bauleiters Ramose (TT 166) in Dra abu el-Naga Nord," *MDAIK* 51 (1995): 32 and 47; Leitz, *Lexikon* IV, 769-770; Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 151.



²⁸⁷⁸ Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 150-1.

²⁸⁷⁹ Säve-Söderbergh, "Eine Ramessidische Darstellung," 178; É. Liptay, "Deux fragments de cercueil de la XXIème Dynastie," *Bulletin du Musée des Beaux-Arts Hongrois* 76 (1992): 12-13; G. Schreiber, "Remarks on the Iconography of Wind-Gods," *Revue roumaine d'égyptologie* 2-3 (1998-1999): 89, 93-94; cf. Spell 83 of the Shu-spells of the Coffin Texts [CT II, 46a-48d]; H. Willems, "The Shu-spells in practice," in *The World of the Coffin Texts. Proceedings of the Symposium held on the occasion of the 100th birthday of A. de Buck, Leiden, December 17-19, 1992*, ed. H. Willems (Leiden, Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1996), 205-207.

jackal-headed figure on the Turin box.²⁸⁸⁰ Likewise, Anubis sometimes pulled the solar barque of Re-Horakhte in scenes from Netherworld books.²⁸⁸¹

Whether as a demon or a deity, the jackal-head was a protective figure in association with the sun god, rather than specific to birth and fertility magic. The jackal-headed figure provides an interesting case of greater decorum restrictions over time. After initially appearing on private objects of the Middle Kingdom, it disappeared in the New Kingdom, only for Egyptians to reintroduce the motive in the 21st Dynasty exclusively in funerary texts. This general pattern of greater restriction appears quite common to the non-fertility-specific apotropaic motives.

6.2.14 Sun-Disk on Legs

Often represented along with the jackal-head on legs, the sun-disk on legs can also appear alone on a number of wands.²⁸⁸² The sun-disk on one wand appears like the sign Gardiner N8 ().²⁸⁸³ Interestingly, one wand²⁸⁸⁴ depicts  instead of the sun disk. Since this sign could have stood as an ideogram for Onuris, who Egyptians equated very often with Shu since the 19th Dynasty,²⁸⁸⁵ Altenmüller had assumed that this sign on the wand was a reference to Shu.²⁸⁸⁶ If that attribution is correct, it is consistent with his role of killing the enemies of the sun god.²⁸⁸⁷ However, there is no parallel to the sun disk on legs on other objects.²⁸⁸⁸ Likewise, the connection of the *nw*-pot sign to Shu for the Middle Kingdom is rather tenuous, since the

²⁸⁸⁰ Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 150.

²⁸⁸¹ T. DuQuesne, "Seth and the Jackals," in *Egyptian Religion: The Last Thousand Years. Studies dedicated to the Memory of Jan Quaegebeur* I, ed. W. Clarysse et al. (OLA 85; Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 617.

²⁸⁸² Ex: Berlin 6715 + Fitzwilliam 395/1932; BM EA 24425, 38192; Florence MA 5076; Kofler A 100; Munich ÄS 2826; Ashmolean E3953; UC16382.

²⁸⁸³ Ex: BM 18175: Roberson, "Netherworld iconography," 440, note 105: *Wb.* 1, 293.

²⁸⁸⁴ Brooklyn 16.580.145.

²⁸⁸⁵ Bruyère, *Rapport* 20.2, 117, note 1.

²⁸⁸⁶ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 173-174.

²⁸⁸⁷ H. O. Lange, *Der magische Papyrus Harris* (Copenhagen: A. F. Host & Son, 1927), 13-27.

²⁸⁸⁸ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 575.

association of Onuris with Shu occurred after the period of use of the wands.²⁸⁸⁹ Thus, there is no proof that the sun disk on legs was supposed to represent any specific deity, rather than as a general reference to the sun god. Quirke had raised the possibility of the sun-disk as a symbol of protection in the daytime,²⁸⁹⁰ in contrast to the torch motif. In that case, the motif would have related to the day-and-night protection spells from Berlin 3027.²⁸⁹¹

6.2.15 Torch

The torch, presumably representing nocturnal protection,²⁸⁹² occurred in association with several motifs. In relation with the sun-disk, artists depicted the torch on the same face²⁸⁹³ or without the sun-disk on the same face,²⁸⁹⁴ with some instances of wands with sun-disk without the torch.²⁸⁹⁵ On one wand,²⁸⁹⁶ a larger and smaller torch motif appeared on one face, which also bore two sun disks with rays. While the larger torch adjoins the Aha-image, the reverse, the side without a torch, at this location had a third disk with rays. The distribution of the torch and sun-disks suggests to Quirke that some figure series focused on comprehensive protection of day and night, while others specialized either on the daytime or nighttime.²⁸⁹⁷ This suggestion is particularly notable given Spells Q-T in P. Berlin 3027 discussing the protection of the child

²⁸⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁸⁹⁰ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 397.

²⁸⁹¹ Spells Q-T. See above, § 5.2.4.4.1.

²⁸⁹² Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 397.

²⁸⁹³ Manchester 1801, MMA 22.1.103, Marseille MAM 471 (Altenmüller, “Zaubermesser aus Tübingen,” no. 147; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 17).

²⁸⁹⁴ Cairo JE 2007.04.58, MMA 22.1.154a-b, Liverpool M 11001 (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, nos. 24; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, 52.), Berlin ÄM 14207 (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 38; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 10.), Brussels MR E 2673 (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 51; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 20.).

²⁸⁹⁵ ex-Cecil Collection, Cairo JE 6155, MMA 32.1.231, MMA 22.1.153, Boston MFA 03.1703 (Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 13; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 6), Cairo CG 9435 (JE28017: Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 41; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 26), BM EA 24425, Baltimore 71.510 (Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 1; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 48), BM EA 58794 (Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 65; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 67), BM EA 6539 (Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 66; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, no. 68).

²⁸⁹⁶ BM EA 18175.

²⁸⁹⁷ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 397.

during the day-time and night-time.²⁸⁹⁸ Furthermore, as we will discuss below,²⁸⁹⁹ some of the birth wands have inscriptions reading “protection of the day, protection of the night,” the same phrase as in the spells. Thus, this day-and-night concept appears to have been present in both the texts and material culture of birth from the Middle Kingdom to the early New Kingdom. With the New Kingdom shift to an iconography more distinct from solar rebirth/birth motifs, the day-and-night contrast appeared to have no longer been relevant for birth imagery.

As discussed above, a torch motif also appeared in association with the baboon, sometimes with the *wḏst*-eye as third element. This triple group also occurred on both long sides of steatite cuboid rod MMA 26.7.1275.²⁹⁰⁰ On one example,²⁹⁰¹ the torch closed the figure series following three motifs not otherwise attested in the corpus: jackal-headed kneeling snake-holder, lioness-headed human-bodied figure seated on ground with eye above and *wḏst*-eye over knees, and *ḏd*-pillar. As Quirke had noted,²⁹⁰² this quartet of figures appear similar to the jackal-headed figure, shabti-figure, *ḏd*, and torch motifs that occurred on sets of inscribed bricks placed at cardinal points around the body in New Kingdom and later burials,²⁹⁰³ as well as on afterlife papyri.²⁹⁰⁴ This comparison is notable given the scholarly comparison between the burial bricks and birth bricks.²⁹⁰⁵

Torches and fire played a regular role in religious texts of the Middle and New Kingdoms. For example, some funerary and temple incantations mentioned lighting and

²⁸⁹⁸ See above in § 5.2.4.4.1.

²⁸⁹⁹ See in § 6.3.2.1.

²⁹⁰⁰ Fischer, *Turtles*, 32-33, no. 92.

²⁹⁰¹ Berlin ÄM 14207.

²⁹⁰² Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 397.

²⁹⁰³ Roth and Roehrig, "Magical Bricks," 121-139; Silverman, "Magical Bricks of Hunuro," 725-741.

²⁹⁰⁴ Book of the Dead chapter 151d-g; B. Lüscher, *Untersuchungen zu Totenbuch Spruch 151* (SAT 2; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998).

²⁹⁰⁵ Roth and Roehrig, "Magical Bricks," 121-139. See § 7.2.2.

extinguishing torches.²⁹⁰⁶ Indeed, Altenmüller had noted the lighting of torches at New Year rites, as mentioned in an early 12th Dynasty inscription.²⁹⁰⁷ Fire as a magical weapon indeed appears to have been of fundamental importance both in the Amduat and in the Coffin Texts.²⁹⁰⁸ To Liptay,²⁹⁰⁹ the use of the torch on the apotropaia alludes to the same symbolism. The torch, thus, was not normally a motive in daily-life magic, with its usage on apotropaia an exception.

6.2.16 Figure Entourages

Similar entourages of apotropaic figures occurred primarily on bedroom objects and funerary compositions primarily from the Middle and New Kingdoms. Both indicated the contexts in which such imagery served Egyptians. While the former highlighted the continuity of the imagery and the association between fertility and bedroom magic from the late Middle Kingdom through the early New Kingdom, the latter demonstrate discontinuity during the New Kingdom, with revival in the 21st Dynasty. They lend further evidence of the protective nature of the figures both for regular life and the afterlife.

6.2.16.1 Objects of the Bedroom

It is notable that similar series of figures appeared on other objects, such as boxes, a headrest, Kerman bed inlays, and kohl jars, that have particular associations with the bedroom. They indicate a strong association of the figures with protection of the household, which would

²⁹⁰⁶ D. Luft, *Das Anzünden der Fackel. Untersuchungen zu Spruch 137 des Totenbuches* (SAT 15; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2009); for New Kingdom temple offering ritual, N. Tacke, *Das Opferitual des ägyptischen Neuen Reiches I* (OLA 222; Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 182-4.

²⁹⁰⁷ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia I*, 130 n. 3.

²⁹⁰⁸ H. Willems, *Chests of life: A study of the typology and conceptual development of Middle Kingdom standard class coffins* (MVEOL 25; Leiden: Ex Oriente Lux, 1988), 144 and 159; Willems, "The Shu-spells in practice," 205; É. Liptay, "Bandeau sur la tête - Aspect religieux d'un motif iconographique de la 21^e Dynastie," *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-arts* 96 (2002): 29-30.

²⁹⁰⁹ Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 153.

be especially needed during the dangerous transition period that is childbirth. Likewise, they show some continuation of some of the Middle apotropaic imagery into the New Kingdom.

A couple boxes from tombs depict multiple apotropaic figures, with Aha and Ipet appearing foremost. In addition to these two deities and the upright lion, painted wooden box Fitzwilliam E.15.1907 (Figure 248) also illustrated a feline, ibex, and a female caprid with head turned back, baby animal head and legs emerging from birth with muzzle in jaws of right-facing hyena.²⁹¹⁰ Considering the imagery, the suggestion that the box was for toiletries is likely.²⁹¹¹ Likewise, the ivory box from Abydos Tomb E3 also had a compartment with the image of a baboon, in addition to compartments with Aha and a cobra.²⁹¹² Although the box originated from a tomb, it may have had usage in daily life prior to deposition, such as cosmetics or toiletries.

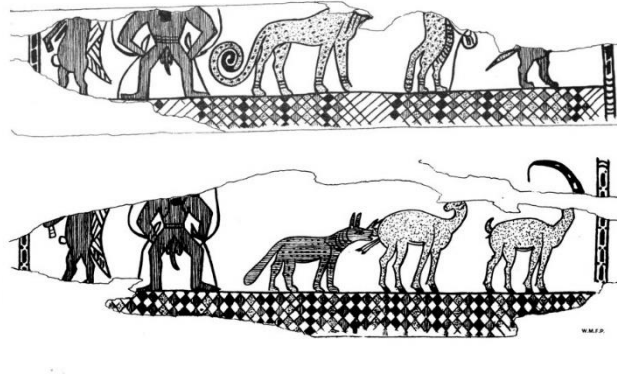


Figure 248 – Wooden box Fitzwilliam E.15.1907. Image from Petrie, *Gizeh and Rifeh*, pl 24.

Another bedroom object with similar apotropaic iconography is the wooden headrest of Neferhotep (Figure 249).²⁹¹³ In addition to sides showing Ahat, Ipet, and the upright lion,²⁹¹⁴ a

²⁹¹⁰ Petrie, *Gizeh and Rifeh*, 20-21, pl. 24; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 333 fig. 4.18, 339 fig. 4.31, 360 fig. 4.77, 413.

²⁹¹¹ Petrie, *Gizeh and Rifeh*, 20.

²⁹¹² Garstang, *El Arábah*, 5, 8, 26, pls. 4, 11, 14; Quirke *Birth Tusks*, 360, fig. 4.76. For descriptions of Aha and cobra figures on the box, see above in § 2.2.1; § 6.2.12.

²⁹¹³ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 113 figs. 2.17 (bottom right) and 2.18, 333 fig. 4.17, 339 fig. 4.30, 359 fig. 4.75, 414; Miniaci and Quirke, “Reconceiving the Tomb,” 344-346, figs. 5-6 and 10a-d.

²⁹¹⁴ For descriptions of these figures, see above in § 2.2.1; § 2.5.1; § 6.2.1.

fourth side of the headrest depicts a right-facing figure with human body with a triangular bull-like head, striated tripartite headcloth, plain kilt, and a *khrep*-scepter in the rear hand. The headrest is also notable for its inscriptions, with the side with the lion giving a legend specifying the purpose of the object, *s3 snb hr šs n hnrt wr Nfr-ḥtp* “protection and/of health for the secretary of the Main Enclosure Neferhotep.” In parallel to the Berlin 3027 Spells Q-T and formulae on some of the birth wands,²⁹¹⁵ the inscription in front of Taweret reads *s3 hrw* “protection of day” and the text before the bull-man recites *s3 grḥ* “protection of night.” The bull-man would therefore likely have represented another protective deity against negative forces operating at night.²⁹¹⁶



Figure 249 – Headrest of Neferhotep. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 2.17.

From tombs in Kerma contemporary with the Second Intermediate Period in Egypt, ivory inlays from the footboards of wooden beds included a type representing animals and magical figures (Figure 250),²⁹¹⁷ represented in an Egyptian naturalistic style.²⁹¹⁸ While the inlays showcased an environment different from that of the Egyptian apotropaia, with many more birds

²⁹¹⁵ See in § 5.2.4.4; § 6.3.2.1.

²⁹¹⁶ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 414.

²⁹¹⁷ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 265-271, pls. 54-56; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 510-512.

²⁹¹⁸ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, v. 2, 268.

and less larger predators,²⁹¹⁹ some of the imagery bore parallels to the latter. Most notable of the motifs are those of Ipet/Taweret, shown either with²⁹²⁰ or without²⁹²¹ a skirt and typically holding a knife. Rows of this figure took the middle row on more complete footboards, while the upper row consisted of flying creatures and the bottom animals on the ground.²⁹²² Border forms include most often a papyrus bunch form and a symmetrical form²⁹²³ that may be a frog or turtle like those on the wands.²⁹²⁴ Crocodile and turtle inlays said to be from a bed may instead be from a box, given their occurrence with elephant-shaped box inlays and the otherwise lack of attestation of the former from other beds.²⁹²⁵ Other motifs may have derived or been equivalent to those on apotropaia, namely the recumbent lion,²⁹²⁶ the giraffe akin to the long-necked feline,²⁹²⁷ the giraffe head similar to the jackal-head,²⁹²⁸ the drinking winged giraffe resembling the winged griffin,²⁹²⁹ and the fox/hyena approximating leopards.²⁹³⁰ Since no beds nor images of beds from Middle Kingdom Egypt bore such imagery, these inlays appeared to be a local development,²⁹³¹ with perhaps some wands produced in the Kerma region.²⁹³²

²⁹¹⁹ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 512; see Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 268.

²⁹²⁰ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 266-7, 269-71, nos. 14 (K 439: North bed), 18 (K 449), 22 (K 1001), 28 (K 1056).

²⁹²¹ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 266-7, 269-71, nos. 2 (14-2-621), 3 (14-2-522), 5 (14-2-626), 7 (K 309:34), 20 (15-2-40), 27 (K 1053: 1).

²⁹²² Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 267.

²⁹²³ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 266, 268-71, nos. 7, 17 (K 444), 22, 27, 29 (K 1056), 60 (K XVI C).

²⁹²⁴ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 510-1.

²⁹²⁵ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 511.

²⁹²⁶ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 268, 269, no. 11 (K 407).

²⁹²⁷ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 270-1, nos. 28, 33 (K 1096: 11ff.), 36 (?) (K XVI A/4).

²⁹²⁸ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 270, no. 31 (K 1090).

²⁹²⁹ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 268-9, nos. 2, 3, 7.

²⁹³⁰ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 268, 270, nos. 27, 31.

²⁹³¹ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 265.

²⁹³² Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 512.

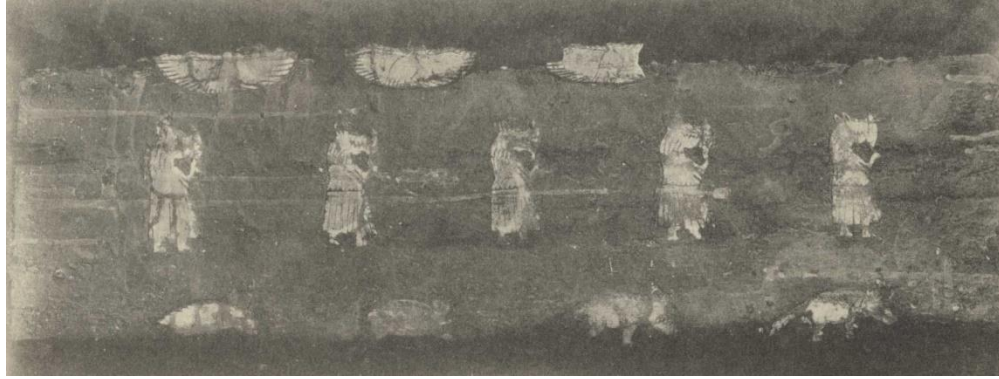


Figure 250 – Footboard from a bed in K 449, Kerma. Image from Reisner, *Excavations at Kerma IV-V*, pl. 54.4.

Dating to the early to mid-18th Dynasty, a category of limestone kohl vessels bore imagery very similar to that of the Middle Kingdom apotropaia (Figures 251-2).²⁹³³ They occurred predominantly in Abydos, and likely were produced in the same workshop or school.²⁹³⁴ While some depicted an open band of decoration of mostly spirals, boliti fish, and lotuses, most vessels consist of framed panels with a main decoration element.²⁹³⁵ One of the most common designs was Ipet,²⁹³⁶ while other motifs included a frontal Aha/Bes,²⁹³⁷ jackal head,²⁹³⁸ falcon with outstretched wings,²⁹³⁹ and, occasionally, geometric motifs. An interesting variant in glazed steatite showed a leonine figure with a vertical snake or snake-staff, a cobra with a head on each end, and a winged griffin with a human head on the back, in addition to the jackal head, Aha-

²⁹³³ R. T. Sparks, "The Taweret Workshop: Nicholson Museum 00.107 and Related Vessels," in *Egyptian Art in the Nicholson Museum, Sydney*, ed. K.N. Sowada and B.G. Ockinga (Sydney: Department of Mediterranean Archaeology, 2006), 241-61; Quirke, "Figuring Migrations," 370-2.

²⁹³⁴ Sparks, "The Taweret Workshop," 242, 247.

²⁹³⁵ Sparks, "The Taweret Workshop," 247.

²⁹³⁶ Nicholson 00.107 (Sparks, "The Taweret Workshop," fig. 1); Abydos Tomb D76 (Randall-MacIver and Mace, *El Amrah*, pl. 47, bottom right); Ashmolean E2596 (Abydos E263; Garstang, *El Arábah*, pl. 18, top row, fourth from the left); Cairo CG 18591 (F. von Bissing, *Steingefäße II* [CGC 34; Vienna: A. Holzhausen, 1907], pl. 9.); Esna Tomb 229E (Downes, *Esna*, fig. 78, bottom); Esna Tomb 247E (Downes, *Esna*, fig. 78, top); UC 7889 (Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, pl. 22.2); Cairo CG 18593 (Von Bissing, *Steingefäße II*, Cat. No. 18593.)

²⁹³⁷ Abydos D113 (Randal-MacIver and Mace, *El Amrah*, pl. 47, top left); Cairo CG 18593.

²⁹³⁸ Nicholson 00.107; Esna Tomb 247E.

²⁹³⁹ Ex: Nicholson 00.107; Ashmolean E2596; Cairo CG 18593.

figure, and Ipet.²⁹⁴⁰ Lids tended to depict a single image, such as Ipet,²⁹⁴¹ Aha,²⁹⁴² rosettes, or a boliti fish with a lotus in its mouth. Another variation of this type of vessel were upright containers presented by a monkey figure (Figure 251), which tend to have designs such as Ipet,²⁹⁴³ Aha,²⁹⁴⁴ the jackal head,²⁹⁴⁵ branches, and lotuses within framed panels. While the appearance of Ipet and Aha might suggest use by women, both genders used kohl.²⁹⁴⁶ Likewise, there was no gender bias seen in the archaeological context.²⁹⁴⁷ These objects more likely referred to the transition from night to day and death to rebirth,²⁹⁴⁸ with the falcon representing Horus and the jackal-head Anubis. Similarly, the boliti fish denoted to the daily rebirth of the sun god.²⁹⁴⁹



Figure 251 – (left to right) Kohl vessels from Abydos D116, Abydos D110, and Gurob (UC 7889). Images from Quirke, “Figuring Migrations,” fig. 5, 6, and 9.

²⁹⁴⁰ Moscow I, 1a 3600: Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 519; S. Hodjash, *Ancient Egyptian Vessels in the State Puskin Museum of Fine Art Moscow* (Baltimore: Halgo Inc., 2005), Cat. 165, pl. 21.

²⁹⁴¹ Abydos D113, Ashmolean E2596.

²⁹⁴² Aniba Tomb S35: Steindorff, *Aniba*, v. II, pl. 59.6; Sparks, “The Taweret Workshop,” fig. 3d.

²⁹⁴³ Abydos D116 (Randall-MacIver and Mace, pl. 46, bottom row, right); Cairo CG 18579 (Von Bissing, *Steingefäße* II, Cat. No. 18579; Fitzwilliam E.14.1901 (Abydos D108; Randall-MacIver and Mace, *El Amrah*, pl. 44, top row, right; G. L. Spalinger, “Monkey holding a kohl tube,” in *Egypt’s Golden Age: The Art of Living in the New Kingdom 1558-1085 B.C.*, ed. E. Brovarski et al. (Boston: MFA, 1982), 225, Cat. 285.

²⁹⁴⁴ Fitzwilliam E.14.1901.

²⁹⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁴⁶ Sparks, “The Taweret Workshop,” 250. Ex: Tomb scene from TT217 (E. Brovarski, “Kohl and Kohl Containers,” in *Egypt’s Golden Age: The Art of Living in the New Kingdom 1558-1085 B.C.*, ed. E. Brovarski et al. (Boston: MFA, 1982), 216, fig. 57.).

²⁹⁴⁷ Garstang, *El Arábah*, 27; R. S. Merrillees, *Trade and Transcendence in the Bronze Age Levant* (Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 39; Gölëborg: P. Åström, 1974), 22.

²⁹⁴⁸ Sparks, “The Taweret Workshop,” 250.

²⁹⁴⁹ A. J. Milward, “Bowls,” in *Egypt’s Golden Age: The Art of Living in the New Kingdom 1558-1085 B.C.*, ed. Brovarski et al. (Boston: MFA, 1982), 141-2.

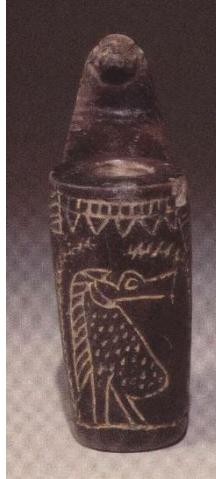


Figure 252 – Monkey-shaped kohl tube, from Abydos D116. Image from Patch, *Reflections of Greatness*, Cat. 29.

6.2.16.2 Funerary Texts

While this work has discussed occasional parallels from New Kingdom Netherworld Books above, there are additional funerary texts that bear similar apotropaic imagery. From the Middle Kingdom, certain versions of the Book of the Two Ways illustrated some familiar motifs. Later, in a 21st Dynasty version of a scene from the Amduat, some of the same Middle Kingdom figures reappeared. These occurrences indicate that the images had functioned in the rebirth of the deceased.

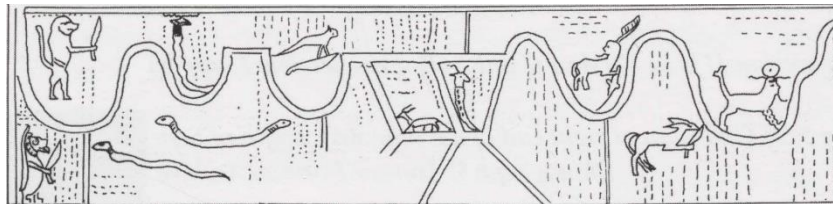


Figure 253 - Cairo CG 28083, Lesko section IV, lower register. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.38.

From Deir el-Bersha,²⁹⁵⁰ two coffins have versions of the Book of Two Ways populated with figures, some of which are parallel to or bear resemblance to those from Middle Kingdom apotropaia (Figure 253).²⁹⁵¹ Similar to the latter, the figures on the Book of Two Ways tended to wield protective weapons and attributes like knives, snakes, and lizards.²⁹⁵² Liptay had suggested that the iconography of the Book of Two Ways may have functioned as a prototype of both the creatures on Middle Kingdom apotropaia and the beings appearing in the Book of the Dead 144-146 and New Kingdom Netherworld Books.²⁹⁵³ While most of the imagery is quite separate, several motifs from the coffins are the same as those on the apotropaia,²⁹⁵⁴ namely the Ipet/Taweret,²⁹⁵⁵ baboon,²⁹⁵⁶ turtle,²⁹⁵⁷ serpent,²⁹⁵⁸ cobra,²⁹⁵⁹ donkey-head,²⁹⁶⁰ and ram-headed

²⁹⁵⁰ Cairo CGT 28083 and Cairo JE 37566: Lesko, *Book of Two Ways*; B. Backes, *Das altägyptische "Zweiwegbuch": Studien zu den Sargtexten-Sprüchen 1029-1130* (AeA 69; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005).

²⁹⁵¹ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 463.

²⁹⁵² E. Hermesen, *Die zwei Wege des Jenseits. Das altägyptische Zweiegbuch und seine Topographie* (OBO 112; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1991), 135-137; Backes, *Das altägyptische "Zweiwegbuch"*, 330-3; Roberson, "The Early History of 'New Kingdom' Netherworld Iconography," 436.

²⁹⁵³ Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 153; W. Waitkus, "Anmerkungen zu der Verteilung der Dämonnamen aus TB 144/147 im 'Zweiwegbuch'," *GM* 62 (1983): 79-83; Hermesen, *Die zwei Wege des Jenseits*, 119-120; Backes, *Das altägyptische "Zweiwegbuch"*, 297-303; Roberson, "The Early History of 'New Kingdom' Netherworld Iconography," 436.

²⁹⁵⁴ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 476-7.

²⁹⁵⁵ Cairo CG 28083: Lesko section IV, lower way/Backes section 2, lower (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 464, fig. 5.38); Cairo JE 37566: Lesko Section IV, lower way (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 473, fig. 5.63).

²⁹⁵⁶ Cairo CG 28083: Lesko section IV, lower way/Backes section 2, lower (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.38); Lesko section VI/Backes section 4 (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 468, fig. 5.41). Cairo JE 37566: Lesko section II (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 472, fig. 5.55); Lesko section III, lower way (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 473, fig. 5.63).

²⁹⁵⁷ Cairo JE 37566: Lesko section III, upper way (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 473, fig. 5.59).

²⁹⁵⁸ Cairo CG 28083: Lesko section IV, lower way/Backes section II, lower (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.38). Cairo JE 37566: Lesko section II (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 471-2, figs. 5.50, 5.54); Lesko section III, upper way (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.59); Lesko section III, lower way (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 473, figs. 5.62, 5.63).

²⁹⁵⁹ Cairo CG 28083: Lesko section VI/Backes section 4 (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 469, fig. 5.44); Cairo JE 37566: Lesko section II (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 471, fig. 5.51).

²⁹⁶⁰ Cairo JE 37566: Lesko section II (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, figs. 5.50, 5.57.); Lesko section IV, lower way (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 475, fig. 5.65).

human.²⁹⁶¹ Other motifs that are similar include the feline,²⁹⁶² bull-head with human body,²⁹⁶³ scarab,²⁹⁶⁴ and Seth animal and falcon.²⁹⁶⁵ Given the appearance of the sun god in this text,²⁹⁶⁶ this apotropaic imagery likely had solar associations in the Book of Two Ways as well.

Much later, in the late 21st Dynasty, apotropaic imagery from the Middle Kingdom reoccurred in a fragment of a funerary papyrus now held in the Louvre,²⁹⁶⁷ which contains a condensed and altered version of the closing scene of the Amduat.²⁹⁶⁸ One of the figures is the lion-headed standing goddess, a motif also seen on the same register of the 11th hour of the Amduat,²⁹⁶⁹ who holds a knife bowing over a mound containing the symbol of dead enemies. In contrast, the recumbent cow on a basket, frog, and hippopotamus goddess holding a knife largely did not come from the traditional iconographic repertoire of the Amduat or any other Netherworld Books.²⁹⁷⁰ The weapons and attributes these figures sometimes wield, similar to those on the Middle Kingdom corpus, indicated their apotropaic role.²⁹⁷¹ Likewise, these deities encircled or flanked the dead person (archetypically Osiris) with magical protection,²⁹⁷² an activity which is quite similar to some interpretations on the use of the wands.

²⁹⁶¹ Cairo CG 28083: Lesko section V/ Backes section 3 (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 467, fig. 5.40. Cairo JE 37566: Lesko section IV (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 473 and 475, figs. 5.63 and 5.66).

²⁹⁶² Cairo CG 28083: Lesko section V/ Backes section 3 (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.40); Lesko section VI/ Backes section IX (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 469, fig. 5.46).

²⁹⁶³ Cairo CG 28083: Lesko section III, upper (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 464, fig. 5.37); Cairo JE 37566: Lesko section III, upper way (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 473, fig. 5.58.).

²⁹⁶⁴ Cairo CG 28083: Lesko section VI/ Backes section 4 (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.44); Cairo JE 37566: Lesko section IV (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 475, figs. 5.65-7).

²⁹⁶⁵ Cairo JE 37566: Lesko section II (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 471, fig. 5.52).

²⁹⁶⁶ For example, Cairo CG 28083: Lesko Section VI/Backes section 4 (Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.44).

²⁹⁶⁷ A. Niwiński, *Studies on the Illustrated Theban Funerary Papyri of the 11th and 10th Centuries B.C.* (Freiburg: Universität Freiburg Schweiz; Göttingen: Vanderhoeck and Ruprecht, 1989), 354 [Paris 17]; 207-208, fig. 80 [Pap. Louvre N.3110]; fig. 5.

²⁹⁶⁸ Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 152-3

²⁹⁶⁹ Hornung, *Das Amduat*, no. 807.

²⁹⁷⁰ Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 153; See exceptions above, §4.2.6.

²⁹⁷¹ É. Liptay, "Réflexions sur le rôle symbolique des lézards en Égypte à propos de deux objets de bronze," *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beux-Arts* 85 (1996): 12-15.

²⁹⁷² Liptay, "From Middle Kingdom," 153.

6.2.17 Conclusions

The apotropaic iconography served as birth iconography from the late Middle Kingdom to the early 18th Dynasty. Some of the motives, mainly the griffin and long-necked feline/serpopard, represented revivals of iconography from the Predynastic and Early Dynastic, with modifications to suit their new role. One can subdivide the figures into those specialized in fertility and birth magic and those providing more general protection. While the former, namely Aha/Bes, Ipet/Taweret, Heqet, and Renenutet, continued their roles into the New Kingdom, the latter no longer occurred as part of birth and fertility iconography. An exception is the lion deity, which initially seemed to have held similar meaning as Ipet, then became more limited to headrests in the New Kingdom.²⁹⁷³ Some motives, such as the feline, baboon, crocodile, snake, and turtle, occurred in the New Kingdom on amulets and figurines unrelated to fertility. A number of figures, like the baboon, turtle, snake, cobra, and feline, continued in New Kingdom funerary texts, with forms like the jackal-head and wrapped cow reappearing in 21st Dynasty funerary texts. These motives thus appeared to have experienced greater decorum restrictions over time, becoming more limited to the funerary sphere.

The bedroom items with apotropaic iconography, with some dating as late as the early to mid-18th Dynasty, indicate greater continuity of the imagery than generally previously thought. Thus, the transition from the Middle Kingdom to the New Kingdom was gradual in terms of this material, rather than featuring a major religious change. Indeed, the concept of the connection between bedroom and fertility protection highlighted by the apotropaic imagery served as the basis for the bedroom iconography characterizing much of the New Kingdom. In the latter, Egyptians focused on the more birth-related deities from apotropaia. Similarly, the concept for the apotropaia, namely the equation of the child with the newborn sun god, was a feature in

²⁹⁷³ For these headrests, see Szpakowska, "Feet of Fury," 217, Table 1.

medical/magical spells from both the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom.²⁹⁷⁴ The magic wands, in terms of dating, their formulae, and tomb scenes depicting these items, followed the same trends as the larger apotropaic iconography.

6.3 Birth Wands

This apotropaic iconography appears most clearly connected to birth on the wands. As indicated above (see Chapter 1), scholarship has long associated ivory wands and wand-shaped objects in other materials with childbirth in this life and the afterlife. In terms of material, Quirke had argued that Egyptians appear to have prioritized the tusk form over color or ability to reflect light.²⁹⁷⁵ There is some disagreement how Egyptians exactly used the wands, with Hubai challenging the widely-held scholarly assumptions that practitioners dragged the objects on the ground and that the curved objects depicted on certain tomb scenes and netherworld scenes from the Middle through the New Kingdom were the wands. New discoveries indicate that, while most of the wands from archaeological contexts occurred in cemeteries, they also appeared in settlements as well. As we discuss below, the wands clearly belonged to the elite sphere. The inscriptions on some of the objects, as well as indications of wear and repair and tomb iconography, indicate that these items first served to protect women and children during childbirth and/or shortly after birth. Other wands, buried in pristine condition, may indicate that Egyptians made them specifically for the tomb, perhaps serving a similar protective function for the transition to the afterlife.

²⁹⁷⁴ See above, § 5.2.4.4.1.

²⁹⁷⁵ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 218.

6.3.1 Context and Dating

While Szpakowska had stated that the identity of the user is uncertain,²⁹⁷⁶ this assertion is not correct based on the evidence. In all the known contexts of the wands, there is an association with the elite, not the common people.²⁹⁷⁷ Despite the fact that items of wealth occur in many middle-class burials of the Middle Kingdom,²⁹⁷⁸ the titles of the women who originally owned the objects, inscribed on several of these objects, are high status.²⁹⁷⁹ There are four cases of a “hereditary princess”,²⁹⁸⁰ five instances of a “king’s daughter,”²⁹⁸¹ and ten wands naming a “mistress of the house.”²⁹⁸² In fact, one mud wand found in Abydos (Figure 254) bears an inscription with the name and titles of Senebkay, late 13th Dynasty king of the Abydos region.²⁹⁸³ Notably, the objects did not occur in temples nor in the town of Lahun, further indicating that these objects were not in the purview of common people. The *Nbt pr* could have been a specialist in birth magic, as suggested by Quirke, who had noted Petrie discovered a number of artifacts that could be associated with defense of infants, including a pair of ivory clappers, a wooden Aha-type of figure, and a Aha-type mask.²⁹⁸⁴ However, a number of the apotropaic figures, namely the standing lion, Aha/Bes, Ipet/Taweret, and crocodiles, were not exclusive to elites.

²⁹⁷⁶ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 137.

²⁹⁷⁷ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 216-217.

²⁹⁷⁸ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 29, note 37.

²⁹⁷⁹ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 214, 306.

²⁹⁸⁰ PAM 33.1578: Petrie, *Gaza III*, pl. 28.8; Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 522 no. 44; Brussels E 6341; MMA 08.200.19.

²⁹⁸¹ Cairo 9438; Munich 2826; Oxford AM 3953; Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, pl. 28.8; Brussels E 6361.

²⁹⁸² BM 18175; Loud, *Megiddo II*, pl. 203; Berlin 14207a, 14207c-d; UC OdU 37/14a-c; Louvre E 3614 + MMA 26.7.1288a-b.

²⁹⁸³ Cairo CG 9433: Altenmuller, “Totenglauben,” 131, n. 10.

²⁹⁸⁴ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 29.



Figure 254 - Cairo CG 9433 (JE 34988). Image from Daressy, *Textes et dessins magiques*, pl. 11.

While most contexts were extremely disturbed, Quirke was still able to assess social status from the associated finds. In general, the wands were associated with a high social stratum below the level of highest officials. None of the titles associated with burials containing these objects in Aswan, Thebes, and Abydos mention viziers or high officials with the prefix-title *ḥtmty bity* and only one had embalming regalia,²⁹⁸⁵ while the presence of items such as gaming-sets with the wands²⁹⁸⁶ and an anhydrite duck vase associated in a burial with a wand²⁹⁸⁷ indicate higher status.²⁹⁸⁸ Meanwhile, associated burials in Lisht followed the Memphis-Fayum trend to a more "court-type" style associated with Osiris, meaning more embalming equipment. Nevertheless, known titles include *šs mšꜥ* "secretary of the army,"²⁹⁸⁹ *šs* "secretary/accountant,"²⁹⁹⁰ *iry ꜥt sdm rmt*,²⁹⁹¹ and high official *ḥtmty bity imy-r rwryt, thnty* (?).²⁹⁹² Likewise, tombs associated with wands tend to contain clappers²⁹⁹³ and various ivory objects.²⁹⁹⁴ Given the female owners listed on some of the wands, it is probable that many of the

²⁹⁸⁵ Manchester 1798-1801.

²⁹⁸⁶ Highclere Castle H86, Cairo JE 6155, Liverpool Garstang Museum E7007.

²⁹⁸⁷ Ashmolean E.1912.546.

²⁹⁸⁸ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 216, Table 2.5.

²⁹⁸⁹ New York MMA 15.3.384.

²⁹⁹⁰ New York MMA 15.3.167a-c.

²⁹⁹¹ New York MMA 22.1.153 and 22.1.154a-b.

²⁹⁹² New York MMA 22.1.103- 22.1.105, ex-New York MMA 22.1.104a-b; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 217, Table 217.

²⁹⁹³ Liverpool Garstang E7007; MMA 15.5.197, 15.3.167a-c, 22.1.153, 22.1.154a-b.

²⁹⁹⁴ Manchester 1798-1801; Philadelphia E 6710; MMA 15.5.197, 22.1.65, 22.1.103, 22.1.105; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Tables 2.5-2.6.

wands had initial use during life prior to final deposition with men whose mothers or earlier relatives had used them for childbirth.

The wands with context tended to occur in the Theban region, Lahun, and Abydos, with a few from Middle Egypt and some from Nubia and Syro-Palestine (Figure 255). The iconography bore certain regional differences.²⁹⁹⁵ While Altenmüller first discussed these variations, he included unprovenanced wands in his analysis, rendering some of these comparisons inaccurate. For example, he had considered lotus blossoms as a Middle Egyptian type,²⁹⁹⁶ though most wands with the motif are unprovenanced.²⁹⁹⁷ For wands with firm contexts, the double-bull²⁹⁹⁸ was exclusive to the Theban area, while griffins, the double-lion, and turtles tended to occur in higher concentrations in wands in this region. The most common motifs on wands from Abydos were the most common in wands generally, namely the standing lion, Ipet, frog, and jackal-head. Wands from Middle Egypt showed a similar trend of depicting a limited range of motifs, with lion, wrapped cow, vulture, baboon, and frog figures characteristic. Felines and rearing cobras occurred more frequently with in wands from the Memphis/Fayum region.²⁹⁹⁹ Both Hathor and the tomcat form of Re held the title “Foremost of Heliopolis” in the Coffin Texts,³⁰⁰⁰ which is consistent with this regional concentration of the feline motif. The sole Aha-child came from Lisht,³⁰⁰¹ which appears to have been a local Fayum and Middle Egyptian form.³⁰⁰²

Motifs universal to wands from various regions include the standing lion, Ipet/Taweret, Aha/Bes, wrapped cow, baboon, frog, jackal-head, and disk on legs. In the Coffin Texts, Anubis

²⁹⁹⁵ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 228, 573; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 49-54.

²⁹⁹⁶ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 51-54.

²⁹⁹⁷ Philadelphia 2914, MFA 03.1703, BM EA 34214; one wand from Kuban, Nubia (Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, Cat. 33; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. Ku1).

²⁹⁹⁸ Cairo JE 56273; BM 24426; MMA 19.2.18; Cairo CG 9436; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 50.

²⁹⁹⁹ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 55-56.

³⁰⁰⁰ B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus*, 309.

³⁰⁰¹ MMA 22.1.65 from Lisht (Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, no. 98; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. L6).

³⁰⁰² The other known example being a figurine from Sedment. For this figurine, see Figure 2 and Table 1.

had a wide range known cult places, namely at Abydos, Hierakonpolis, and Busiris,³⁰⁰³ which may be evidence the jackal-headed figure was indeed him. Thoth and baboons had a cultic presence in both Heliopolis and Hermopolis,³⁰⁰⁴ thus explaining the spread of the baboon motif.

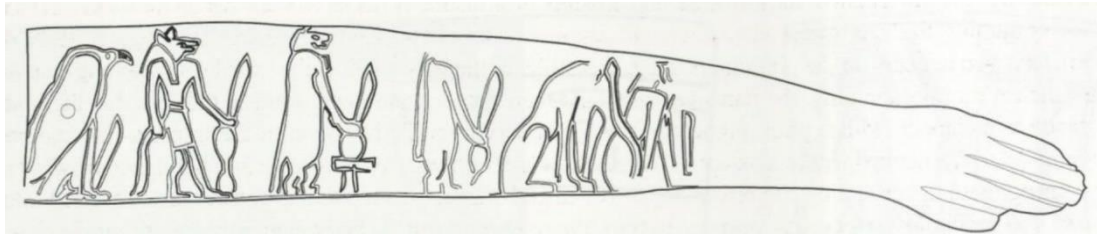


Figure 255 – Damascus NM 7021-2, from Ugarit, tomb 3552. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 2.80.

Excavated wands predominantly appeared in funerary contexts, specifically the tombs of men. While some wands were deposited in pristine condition, others show wear, repairs, and reworking.³⁰⁰⁵ Besides tombs, one wand was reworked (MFA 20.1566) and two others occur in settlement contexts in Tell el Daba and South Abydos. Excavators found the Tell el-Daba wand in a storage room associated with the production and stocking of goods for the palace,³⁰⁰⁶ which may indicate that the object was set aside for later use in the palace. Recent excavation found the other domestic fragment from the Abydos townsite of Wahsut, in a high-status residence known in excavation reports as the Mayor's House.³⁰⁰⁷ Notably, the Mayor's House also produced the only known birth brick,³⁰⁰⁸ so both items likely served the mistress of the house.

As mentioned above,³⁰⁰⁹ Altenmüller had divided the wands into several periods based on his typology of the iconography of the Aha figure, griffin, Ipet/Taweret, lion, and serpent-necked

³⁰⁰³ B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus*, 308, 313, and 316, respectively.

³⁰⁰⁴ B. Altenmüller, *Synkretismus*, 308-9 and 314, respectively.

³⁰⁰⁵ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 214, 218; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 109-111.

³⁰⁰⁶ M. Bietak and I. Forstner-Müller, "Der Hyksos-Palast bei Tell el-Dab'a: zweite und dritte Grabungskampagne (Frühling 2008 und Frühling 2009)," *Ägypten und Levante* 19 (2009): 109-112, fig. 28; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. TeD1.

³⁰⁰⁷ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 214.

³⁰⁰⁸ See below, § 7.2.1.

³⁰⁰⁹ See above, § 1.1.6.

panther.³⁰¹⁰ The approach is limited due to some pieces from tombs containing material with a wide range of dates.³⁰¹¹ These periods ranged from the 11th Dynasty to the end of the Second Intermediate Period. However, at the time of his publication, the full contexts of many of the tombs were not published. Recently, Quirke had disputed this chronology, instead arguing that the wands dated firmly to the late Middle Kingdom through the early New Kingdom.³⁰¹² Excavators found these objects from tombs in Lisht, which Altenmüller had dated to the early Middle Kingdom, in deposits outside of the tombs. Thus, as Quirke had noted,³⁰¹³ deposition of these items could have been later than the tombs. Indeed, the examples that were broken and repaired in ancient times³⁰¹⁴ suggest that at least some were heirlooms,³⁰¹⁵ thus complicating the dating. Instead of dating the wands by the tombs, Quirke had dated them using associated finds.³⁰¹⁶ Using these criteria, Quirke had produced for certain objects a range of dates. It is notable that the only wand from a later New Kingdom context was reworked,³⁰¹⁷ which indicates that it originated from earlier in the New Kingdom. When accounting for Quirke's more reliable dating of the items, Altenmüller's typology can no longer function as a dating tool. Instead, his typology more likely reflected regional differences.

6.3.2 Function

While recent scholarship had revised the context and dating of the wands, the connection to childbirth remains relatively certain. In their secondary use in tombs, they would likewise have served to facilitate rebirth to the afterlife.³⁰¹⁸ These conclusions are based on the materials

³⁰¹⁰ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I,

³⁰¹¹ Romano, *The Bes-image*, 34-35, note 95.

³⁰¹² Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 231-2, 575.

³⁰¹³ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 231.

³⁰¹⁴ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 29, note 35.

³⁰¹⁵ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 29.

³⁰¹⁶ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 231-2.

³⁰¹⁷ Boston MFA 20.1566: Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, no. 138; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Ke2.

³⁰¹⁸ H. Altenmüller, "Ein Zaubermesser der Mittleren Reichen," *SAK* 13 (1986): 26-27; Roberson, "The early history of 'New Kingdom' netherworld iconography," 436.

of choice, the inscriptions on the wands themselves, evidence of their use on the surface of some fragments, and seemingly associated tomb iconography. While Hubai had recently been skeptical of the latter two criteria,³⁰¹⁹ enough evidence indicates that some of the objects were dragged on the ground and most of the tomb iconography did indeed reference to them. Likewise, Egyptians may have also placed the wands on the bodies of mothers and newborns while reciting spells.³⁰²⁰

Altenmüller had proposed three uses for the knives: 1) magical device to protect mothers and children, 2) instrument to help deceased achieve rebirth, 3) ritual object in celebration of a rite before a cult statue.³⁰²¹ The second explanation is particularly used to explain their appearance in tomb scenes.³⁰²²

6.3.2.1 Appearance

The strongest evidence on the use of the wands is in their appearance, in terms of their material, shape, inscriptions, and signs of wear and repair. Likely referring to the goddess Reret/Ipet, the predominant use of ivory is consistent with her protective role. The inscriptions on some of the objects clearly stated their apotropaic function for the child. Finally, many of the items show indications that people used them multiple times for a ritual.

Of the 185 wands, almost all are hippopotamus ivory or bone, except for two of wood,³⁰²³ one of mud,³⁰²⁴ four fragments of biochrome faience possibly from one object, one fragment of faience with monochrome blue glaze.³⁰²⁵ This predominance of ivory largely determined the shape of the wands,³⁰²⁶ which was an asymmetrically curved or rounded arc at one end and

³⁰¹⁹ Hubai, “Der zerbrochene Zauberstab,” 179.

³⁰²⁰ Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia* I, 186-7.

³⁰²¹ Altenmüller, “Ein Zaubermesser des Mittleren Reiches,” 26-27. Also Raven, “A puzzling pataekos,” 7-17, especially 11-2.

³⁰²² Altenmüller, “Totenglauben,” 136.

³⁰²³ Cairo CG 9433 (JE 34988); Oxford AM 1892.1159

³⁰²⁴ Cairo JE 68773.

³⁰²⁵ BM EA 34214.

³⁰²⁶ Roberson, “Netherworld iconography,” 437, n. 80; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, v.1, 29.

slightly pointed at the other end.³⁰²⁷ Some scholars had suggested that the curved shape was a symbolic representation of the course of the sun god in celestial space.³⁰²⁸ Perhaps the knives held by the figures echoes the shape of the objects,³⁰²⁹ with the orientation of the knife's curve pointing down.³⁰³⁰ Knives in iconography sometimes held cult significance, particularly as symbols of protection. Deities such as Aha/Bes and Ipet/Taweret often held knives in depictions or in scenes representing protection of the sun god.³⁰³¹ Thoth held the moon as a knife,³⁰³² while some depictions of malevolent beings illustrated them pierced by knives in order to render them powerless.³⁰³³ Previous scholarship had usually assumed that the use of hippopotamus ivory suggested a connection to Ipet/Reret/Taweret.³⁰³⁴ According to Szpakowska, the length of the wands suggested that most of them are from male hippos, thus associated with Seth.³⁰³⁵ In this theory, these items were charged with Seth's power, since texts such as the Book of the Dead depicted Seth as protective of Ra from Apophis.³⁰³⁶ However, Reret was one of the most consistent figures on the wands, unlike the Seth animal, so it is more likely that the use of ivory reflected this goddess, particularly given her role in the protection of women and children.

³⁰²⁷ Roberson, "Netherworld iconography," 437, n. 81; Steindorff, "The Magical Knives," 42, who also notes: "a few knives show both ends equally rounded."

³⁰²⁸ Vink, "Principles of Apotropaic Magic," 15.

³⁰²⁹ Roberson, "Netherworld iconography," 437, n. 82; R. Ritner, "Magical Wand from Rifeh," in *Searching for Ancient Egypt*, ed. D. P. Silverman (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 235; Vink, "Principles of Apotropaic Magic," 15.

³⁰³⁰ Roberson, "Netherworld iconography," 437, n. 83: See the representative examples shown in Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, v.2, 114-125, all of which exhibit a downward curve.

³⁰³¹ W. Helck, "Messer," *LÄ IV* (1982), § 112-13; R. H. Wilkinson, *Reading Egyptian art: a hieroglyphic guide to ancient Egyptian painting and sculpture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 189; Stevens, *Private religion*, 204-5.

³⁰³² Bonnet, *Reallexikon*, 807; Helck, "Messer," § 112-113.




³⁰³³ Wilkinson, *Reading Egyptian art*, 189; Stevens, *Private religion*, 205.

³⁰³⁴ Graves-Brown, *Dancing for Hathor*, 62.

³⁰³⁵ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 28, notes 24 and 25.

³⁰³⁶ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 28, 26 and 27.

According to the inscriptions on some of the wands, the objects served in defense of mostly unnamed children, either before, during, and/or after birth.³⁰³⁷ These inscriptions ranged from the simple phrase *s3w rꜥ s3w nḥt* “Protection of the Day, Protection of the Night,”³⁰³⁸ naming the owner and/or the child, or passive formulae stating that the demons came to protect. It is notable that the former formula was directly parallel to that in Papyrus Berlin 3027 (Spells Q-T).³⁰³⁹ Another short formula paired the protection sign with the life sign, reading *s3 ʕnh*.³⁰⁴⁰ An example of a longer formula stated, “We have come that we may extend our protection around the healthy child.”³⁰⁴¹ In longer formulae with a passive subject, the recitation read *ḏdw-mdw jn* + protective figure, sometimes giving the name such as *ḏdw mdw jn ʕḥz*:

 ³⁰⁴² or  ³⁰⁴³ or simply  “it is recited by this

protection sign.”³⁰⁴⁴ After this initial phrase, there were two clauses that typically follow, a *stp-z3-ḥr* group³⁰⁴⁵ and a *stp-z3-ḥz* group.³⁰⁴⁶ The former appears to be older,³⁰⁴⁷ with a precursor evident in a Pyramid Text spell,³⁰⁴⁸ while the latter occurred as a magical formula in New Kingdom texts.³⁰⁴⁹ An unique inscription from Copenhagen 7795 (Figure 40) read:³⁰⁵⁰ *ḏd mdw išꜥ tp ḥ[ʃ]t[t?...] ʕK r ʕt tn ḥrdw ms n nbt-šḥt-rꜥ [...]* “Words spoken: cut the head of [any] enemy

³⁰³⁷ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 239; Feucht, *Das Kind*, 100, n. 442 finds the former less likely than the latter two possibilities.

³⁰³⁸ Ex: MMA 30.8.218.

³⁰³⁹ Altenmüller, “Ein Zaubermesser aus Tübingen,” 38. See above in § 5.2.4.

³⁰⁴⁰ Ex: Louvre AF 6447 + Copenhagen 1314. Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 65.

³⁰⁴¹ MMA 08.200.19. Translation from Allen, *Art of Medicine*, 11.

³⁰⁴² Berlin 14207b.

³⁰⁴³ Brussels E 2673.

³⁰⁴⁴ Berlin 14207 d; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 66-67.

³⁰⁴⁵ Berlin 14207; BM 18175, 65439; Brussels E 6361; MMA 22.1.96; Petrie, *Gaza* III, pl. 28.8; Kofler A 100; Munich 2826; Jerusalem PAM(RM)>IAA 1948.1391; MMA 08.200.19; Reisner, *Kerma* IV-V, 522, no. 44

³⁰⁴⁶ Cairo 9438; Louvre E 3614 + MMA 26.7.1288; Brussels E 2673; MMA 22.1.65.

³⁰⁴⁷ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 67.

³⁰⁴⁸ *Pyr.* § 4d.

³⁰⁴⁹ *Urk.* IV, 222, 225, 260.14.

³⁰⁵⁰ Translation from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 239.

male or [female] entering this room of the children born to Nebetsekheta." This inscription may indicate the function of the wands' curved shapes, as well as the knives held by the deities.³⁰⁵¹

Whenever named, the owner was the almost always the mother,³⁰⁵² such as one wand with *dd mdw* formula reading "It is recited: I have come so that I spread the protection (through) the mistress of the house, Seneb."³⁰⁵³ Another possibility is that these objects were part of the equipment for professional magicians and lector priests.³⁰⁵⁴ Aside from the adult woman names, the only other personal names on the wands were that of male offspring,³⁰⁵⁵ who more likely were named after birth.³⁰⁵⁶ Yet, multiple repairs and the spells in the medical-magical texts for children suggest that Egyptians placed importance on both male and female children.³⁰⁵⁷ While Szpakowska had claimed the number of male names may mean a higher mortality rate for male offspring,³⁰⁵⁸ this naming likely reflected the secondary use of these items in tombs of these same men.

For the female owner and her children, this protection discussed in the inscriptions included activity that causes wear on the wands,³⁰⁵⁹ in contrast to the notion that magic spells did not work without written texts.³⁰⁶⁰ While Egyptians placed some of these objects in pristine

³⁰⁵¹ Vink, "Principles of Apotropaic Magic," 15.

³⁰⁵² Quirke, *Birth Tucks*, 214, 306; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 70-1; Altenmüller, "Totenglauben," 131, n. 7-8.

³⁰⁵³ BM 18175.

³⁰⁵⁴ Altenmüller, "Totenglauben," 131, n. 11.

³⁰⁵⁵ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 71; Minhotep (MMA 08.200.19); Nehi (Cairo 9436), Sonbef-resu (BM 65438). All the names were Middle Kingdom: H. Ranke, *Die ägyptischen Personennamen* I (Glückstadt: J. J. Augustin, 1935), 152.9, 207.19.

³⁰⁵⁶ Graves-Brown, *Dancing for Hathor*, 62; Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 30.

³⁰⁵⁷ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 30.

³⁰⁵⁸ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 30, note 39.

³⁰⁵⁹ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 27; Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia* I, 186-7; Steindorff, "Magical knives," 249; Ritner, "Magical wand from Rifeh," 235.

³⁰⁶⁰ A. Loprieno, "Literatur und Religion in Ägypten: ein Antagonismus?" in *Religion und Literatur im Alten Ägypten: Ein Symposium zu Ehren von Elke Blumenthal* [AAWL 81/5], ed. H.-W. Fischer-Elfert and T.S. Richter (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 2011), 55.

condition,³⁰⁶¹ presumably for use in the tomb,³⁰⁶² others bore surface wear and effacing,³⁰⁶³ particularly on one side of the curved end. On certain examples, repair holes and reworked ends are present,³⁰⁶⁴ which indicates that these objects likely served during multiple pregnancies of a single woman and/or passed down from one female family member to another until final deposition in the tomb.³⁰⁶⁵ In one case, the ancient straps that bound the broken pieces are preserved.³⁰⁶⁶ Based on this evidence of use and repair, most scholars had assumed practitioners dragged the objects on the ground, likely in a protective circle.³⁰⁶⁷ Hubai, however, had cast doubt on this hypothesis, arguing that the supposed use wear may simply be natural wear on hippopotamus wands from the animal's life.³⁰⁶⁸ However, this theory does not explain the repair holes, reworked ends, and more extensive effacing on one side. Likewise, the notion had assumed that the Egyptians would choose to simply let the wear remain on a tooth that is otherwise highly worked and carved.

6.3.2.2 Tomb Depictions

Three different types of tomb scenes depicted curved objects that may be the wands: friezes of objects including a bed, representations of nurses, and chapters from the Amduat. These illustrations dated from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom, which was

³⁰⁶¹ Cairo JE 56273; ex-Cecil collection; Ashmolean E2223; Philadelphia UPM E 2914; Cairo JE 88890-1; Jerusalem PAM(RM)>IAA 1948.1391; Manchester 1798, 1801; Cairo JE 6155, SA394a-b; Ashmolean E2224; ?+Liverpool 16.11.06.304; Liverpool GM E7028, E7007; Tübingen 1845; MMA 15.3.384, 15.5.124, 15.3.167a-c, 22.1.79a-b, 22.1.96, 15.3.951a-b; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Cat. TeD1; PAM 33.1578; Damascus NM 8660.

³⁰⁶² Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 214, 218.

³⁰⁶³ Fitzwilliam E205.1900; Manchester 1799; Highclere Castle H86; MMA 48.105.1, 22.1.65, 22.1.105; Cairo JE 2007.04.58.

³⁰⁶⁴ Fitzwilliam E205.1900; Manchester 1799-1800; MMA 08.200.19, 32.1.231, 15.5.197, 22.1.153; Madrid MAN 1980/91/793.

³⁰⁶⁵ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 27.

³⁰⁶⁶ Liptay, "Repelling Demons," 150, Fig. 79.

³⁰⁶⁷ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 27; Wegner, "A decorated birth brick," fig. 15; Altenmüller, *Die Apotropaia* I, 186-7; Hayes, *Scepter*, I, 248-249; P. Lacovara, "Magic Wand," in *Mummies and Magic*, ed. D'Auria et al. (Boston: MFA, 1988), 127-8; Allen, *The Art of Medicine in Ancient Egypt*, 29; Steindorff, "Magical knives," 249; Ritner, "Magical wand from Rifeh," 235.

³⁰⁶⁸ Hubai, "Der zerbrochene Zauberstab," 178; Hubai, "Ein neues Apotropaion," 28.

mostly contemporaneous with the excavated wands according to Quirke's dating. Hubai had cautioned against identifying the function of an object depicted in tomb scenes before any analysis of context, function, and medium of composition.³⁰⁶⁹ However, enough evidence supports that most of the scenes do indeed depict the wands in use.

6.3.2.2.1 Bed Scenes

Of the types of tomb scenes depicting curved wand-like objects, the bed scenes illustrated objects that can most firmly be said to be them. There are two such tomb illustrations, one dating to the early 12th Dynasty, and the other dating to the early 18th Dynasty.

The earlier depiction occurred in a frieze on the inward face of the back long side of the coffin of the regional governor Djehutynakht (Figure 256), from Bersha tomb 10, shaft A.³⁰⁷⁰ In this scene, a bed with a white bedcover and leonine head and legs is the largest object, with four headrests placed beneath and a fifth above the lion head. To the left is a lion-headed rectangle with a set of tall round-topped blades. Above this fifth headrest is a white symmetrical object with a mid-length angular curve and rounded ends pointing down.

³⁰⁶⁹ Hubai, "Der zerbrochene Zauberstab," 179.

³⁰⁷⁰ Now Boston MFA 20.1823; E.L.B. Terrace, *Egyptian Paintings of the Middle Kingdom: The Tomb of Djehuty-Nekht* (New York: George Braziller, 1968), pl. XV and Fig. 10; L. Berman, "The coffins and canopic chests of Tomb 10A," in R. Freed et al., *Secrets of Tomb 10A: Egypt 2000 BC* (Boston, 2009), 120-122.

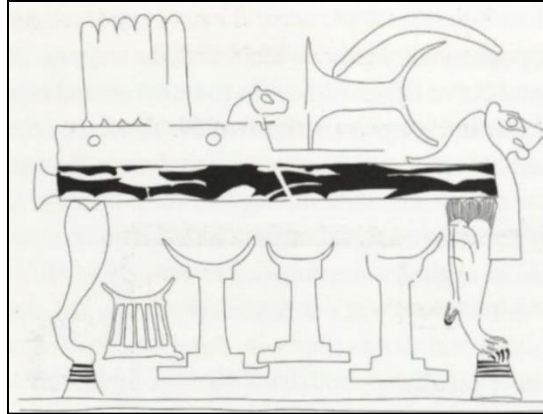


Figure 256 – Detail from outer coffin of Djehutynakht. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.1.

The identification of the curved object is not quite certain, with scholars suggesting several possibilities. While Willems had considered it a type of cushion or pillow,³⁰⁷¹ the shape does not appear to correspond to any cushion.³⁰⁷² Likewise, the curved form seems too long, and its curve too shallow, to suit any of the five different headrests as some sort of cover. The scene most closely resembles that from the tomb of Rekhmire (see below), where the form even more strongly resembles the worked wands.³⁰⁷³ Thus, the artist most plausibly intended to portray a plain version of the worked wands (Figure 257).³⁰⁷⁴ The association of the form with the bed, and here particularly with a headrest, provides information on at least one of the possible contexts of use for the worked wands.³⁰⁷⁵ This evidence also aligns with the known connection between apotropaic imagery and bedroom objects discussed above, indicating that the birth-bed concept had Middle Kingdom origins.

³⁰⁷¹ Willems, *Chests of Life*, entry in Table 13 on p. 224.

³⁰⁷² Altenmüller, "Schutzdämonen," 60-63; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 436.

³⁰⁷³ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 436.

³⁰⁷⁴ Berman, "Coffins and Canopic Chests," 122; Altenmüller, "Schutzdämonen," 60-63; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 436.

³⁰⁷⁵ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 436.

Therefore, this depiction offers the strongest evidence that the object category of worked wand, at least without figures, was being produced already in the early 12th Dynasty.³⁰⁷⁶ Its presence on the Djehutynakht coffin can be used to support the possibility of an earlier date for the finds of plain worked wands in uncertain contexts at Thebes.³⁰⁷⁷ Although no animal head is present on the Djehutynakht example, the coffin was probably produced not far in time from final work on enclosure-wall at the tomb-complex of General Intef, and so the coffin frieze provides circumstantial evidence to support an early Middle Kingdom date of production and deposit for the wand with only animal heads at the ends located there.³⁰⁷⁸

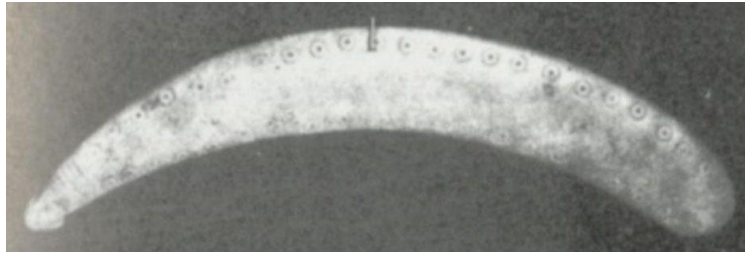


Figure 257 – Philadelphia E 6710, from Locus E5 in Abydos. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 2.91.

A similar depiction occurred in the tomb of the vizier Rekhmire (Figure 258), within the middle scene in a series of three on the north half of the east wall.³⁰⁷⁹ Each of the three scenes contained registers of offerings and deliveries in front of a large-scale image of Rekhmire standing facing right towards the chapel-entrance, with hieroglyphic inscription in vertical columns above the head of the image. The inscription for the middle scene describes the activity as:³⁰⁸⁰

*m33 šbw n ḥtp-nṯr n r nb / m33 k3t mnw nfrw / ḥrp.n.f n ity nṯr nfr / Nb t3wy
mn-ḥpr-r di 'nh dt / R ḥwt-nṯr nt [imn] rw-prw ntyw r ḥt.f*

³⁰⁷⁶ Altenmüller, “Schutzdämonen,” 60-63; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 436.

³⁰⁷⁷ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 436.

³⁰⁷⁸ Cairo JE 91413.

³⁰⁷⁹ TT100: Davies, *Rekh-mi-Rē*, pl. 47.2.

³⁰⁸⁰ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 434.

Seeing the gifts of divine offerings of every day, / seeing the work of beautiful monuments, / which he directed for the sovereign, the younger god, / lord of the two lands, Menkheperra, given life eternally, / for the [Amun] temple and the temples which are in his charge.

The right ends of the upper two registers contained an array of objects less obviously connected with the inscription, unless they formed part of the materials accompanying sculptural production and/or statue cult rituals.³⁰⁸¹ Objects included two yellow serpent-shaped staves, censers, cords or linen packs, steps to mount the bed, jewelry, and ointment vases. As discussed above,³⁰⁸² apotropaic imagery frequently depicting deities holding snake staves, which had use in ritual magic. Likewise, there are three yellow-painted wand-shaped objects, which the primary publication identified as “three magical wands, each terminating at one end in the head of a leopard, at the other in the head of a fennec.”³⁰⁸³ This image is the only example with outward and downward-pointing animal-head ends to a curved shape, making it the least disputed depiction of wand-like objects. Even with the clearest published color image,³⁰⁸⁴ it remains unclear whether the artisan had added any detail between the animal-head motifs.³⁰⁸⁵ While the corpus of worked wands without figure series does not include a parallel for the rounded animal head at proximal end as well as pointed animal head at distal end, no other object type from this period included two animal heads at its ends.³⁰⁸⁶ Therefore, it seems most likely that the artist did depict worked wands here.

³⁰⁸¹ cf. Altenmüller, "Totenglauben und Magie," 141, with 139 fig. 4, on relation to statuary; also pp. 140-141 arguing for hard wood "tusk" of king Sebkhay as evidence of use in rites to protect kingship monuments such as statues.

³⁰⁸² See especially § 2.6.

³⁰⁸³ Davies, *Tomb of Rekh-mi-Rē*, 38.

³⁰⁸⁴ Photograph by Sando Vanini in Z. Hawass, *The lost tombs of Thebes: life in paradise* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2009), 151.

³⁰⁸⁵ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 435.

³⁰⁸⁶ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 435.

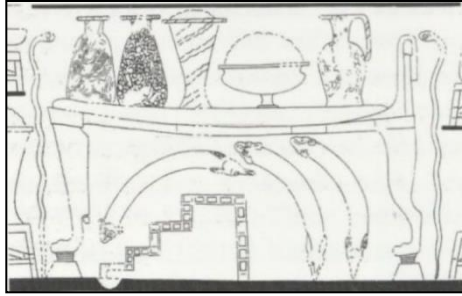


Figure 258 – Detail from the depiction of gifts in the tomb of Rekhmire. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.1.

While the context of the wands clearly belonged in association with the bed, the scene included no headrest, which would be expected with a bed at this and other periods.³⁰⁸⁷ While the scene plausibly concerned consecration equipment for kingship sculpture,³⁰⁸⁸ evidence for that association of either beds or worked wands is scarce for earlier periods. The wand fragments from Tell el-Dab'a occurred in a storage or depot context, as opposed to a place of production. On the other hand, reuse of Middle Kingdom motifs and inscriptions was well attested for the reign of Thutmose III with and without Hatshepsut, such as the location and aspects of the design for the temple to Hatshepsut as king at Deir el-Bahari,³⁰⁸⁹ its accession inscription,³⁰⁹⁰ and the sarcophagus for her as queen.³⁰⁹¹ Thus, Quirke had revised Altenmüller's theory, with the protection of the statue being a mid-18th Dynasty adaption of Middle Kingdom ritual.³⁰⁹² In this case, the Rekhmire relief adapted previous solar birth material for a new, more funerary function. This use is consistent with the contemporary shift in birth iconography away from solar birth/rebirth themes.

³⁰⁸⁷ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 435.

³⁰⁸⁸ Altenmüller, "Totengluaben und Magie," 131-146.

³⁰⁸⁹ Summary by Di. Arnold, "The Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari," in C. Roehrig, *Hatshepsut: from Queen to Pharaoh* (New York: MMA, 2005), 135-140.

³⁰⁹⁰ Zecchi, *Sobek of Shedet*, 49-50.

³⁰⁹¹ W. Grajetzki, "The coffin of the 'King's Daughter' Neferuptah and the sarcophagus of the 'Great King's Wife' Hatshepsut," *GM* 205 (2005): 55-60.

³⁰⁹² Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 435.

6.3.2.2.2 Nurse scenes

Another type of scene which depicted wands are those involving nurses, which is fitting with the inscriptions on some wands. The representations in question occurred in the mid-12th Dynasty tomb chapel of Djehutyhotep at El Bersheh and in the Second Intermediate Period tomb of Bebi at el-Kab. With these particular depictions, certain scholars had theorized a connection to protecting the deceased after birth. The protection offered seemed to have occurred throughout the life of a person, rather than limited to one's childhood. Wet-nurses in these scenes were particularly associated with the wand-shaped objects and snake staffs. These depictions may suggest the involvement of female personnel in the performance of a magical rite,³⁰⁹³ likely childbirth.

The earliest scene involving a possible wand in association with nurses came from the tomb chapel of Djehutyhotep (Figure 259), on the west wall of the inner chamber, the right-hand wall entering the chamber.³⁰⁹⁴ The scene involved a series of left-facing women on a middle register, with larger figures at left facing right, the leftmost again on larger scale, and two sub-registers of smaller figures at right facing left, the whole dominated by a large image of the governor at left. These two larger figures appear to be daughters of the governor, since the inscription of three further figures to the left identify them as such³⁰⁹⁵ and they wear bracelets, anklets, and collars, jewelry not associated with the smaller female figures.

³⁰⁹³ Vink, "Principles of Apotropaic Magic," 15.

³⁰⁹⁴ U and V on plan P. Newberry, *El Bersheh Part I* (London, 1894), 12, fig. 5; W. Smith, "Paintings of the Middle Kingdom at Bersheh," *AJA* 55 (1951): 323, fig. 1.

³⁰⁹⁵ Newberry, *El Bersheh Part I*, 36.

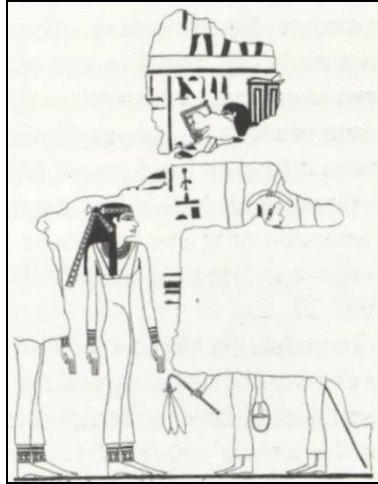


Figure 259 – Wall painting in the tomb chapel of Djehutynakht. Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.4.

There are two different reconstructions of the smaller figures and the inscriptions associated with them. In the restoration by Newberry,³⁰⁹⁶ each of the women are identified by hieroglyphic inscription and hold different objects: (i) top left *sty s3t-ḥd-ḥtp* "dry-nurse Sathedjhotep" with rectangular fan (?) and sloping-topped box; (ii) top right *ī* [...] "I..." holding forward a curved object with rounded end downward, roughly same width along the length, but perhaps slightly wider to forward end; (iii) lower left *mn* [...] "wet-nurse..." right hand holding forward a tripartite fly whisk, left hand at rear strap of mirror-bag, mirror handle visible; (iv) inscriptions lost, lower part of straight tin staff preserved, held diagonally with end to right above base-line of register. In this interpretation, the *sty* appears to have applied to both (i) and (ii), while *mn*[*t*] would likewise have pertained to (iii) and (iv). William Stevenson Smith had questioned the Newberry reconstruction based on the orientation of hieroglyphs on the fragments for figure (i): left of Sathedjhotep, Newberry would have a column *sn(t).f mr[t].f* "his sister, his beloved" where the first *f*-viper was oriented in the opposite direction to the second.³⁰⁹⁷ To better explain this column, Smith had relocated the fragment with *sty s3t-* and the upper part of the

³⁰⁹⁶ Newberry, *El Bersheh Part I*, fig. 5.

³⁰⁹⁷ Smith, "Paintings of the Middle Kingdom," 3234 with 326, fig. 3.

woman with fan and box further back in the next register down, distancing the association of the title "dry-nurse" to the holder of the curved object.³⁰⁹⁸ This reconstruction, however, suffers a similar weakness in explaining the position of the hieroglyphs *sn(t?).f* "his sister (?)," so more detailed analysis is required to reconstruct the scene.³⁰⁹⁹

The curved objects and thin staffs appear to have been the worked wands and serpent staves of the late Middle Kingdom.³¹⁰⁰ As in the chapel of Rekhmire and the coffin of Djehutynakht,³¹⁰¹ the nurse held the object here with ends downward, conforming to the orientation of figures on almost all examples.³¹⁰² The wands show remains of red color, which was likely from the ritual practice of coloring a magical knife on both sides red.³¹⁰³ Newberry had described the curved form as "a boomerang-shaped object, which probably must be interpreted as a pair of castanets."³¹⁰⁴ However, this item is singular, as opposed to being a pair, and did not have the holes for holding the pair together.³¹⁰⁵ No detail within the outline is recorded. While the scene does not record any details within the object's outline, the context of a scene of nurses indicates that the object was a wand.³¹⁰⁶

Interpretation of the scene has generally been based on that of the series of scenes in the tomb. In the register below, treasury officials brought a dog named Ankhu and the equipment for a tour of inspection: carrying chair, retinue weaponry, chest, and sandals. From the composition of other tomb-chapels, some scholars had interpreted the overall theme as the return of the governor to his offering chapel.³¹⁰⁷ However, Quirke had noted that the governor and family face

³⁰⁹⁸ Smith, "Paintings of the Middle Kingdom," 325, fig. 2.

³⁰⁹⁹ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 437.

³¹⁰⁰ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 438.

³¹⁰¹ See § 6.3.2.2.1 above.

³¹⁰² Major exception: BM EA 18175.

³¹⁰³ Gnirs, "Nilpferdstosszähne," 153; For this see Altenmüller, "Totenglauben," 134.

³¹⁰⁴ Newberry, *El Bersheh Part I*, 36.

³¹⁰⁵ Aldred, *Middle Kingdom Art*, no. 54.

³¹⁰⁶ Gnirs, "Nilpferdstosszähne," 133.

³¹⁰⁷ Altenmüller, "Totenglauben und Magie," 136-139; Graves-Brown, *Dancing for Hathor*, 63.

the chapel entrance rather than the statue-shrine for offerings over the burial-place, and so the return may be to his residence in the valley.³¹⁰⁸ This return to the valley would anticipate New Kingdom images of eternally returning home.³¹⁰⁹ The context of the family scene also suggests that the devices were not only for temporary specific magical acts, such as during birth,³¹¹⁰ but also for continuous everyday protection.³¹¹¹

Similar scenes of nurses offering protection to the deceased and his family occurred on the back wall of Bebi's tomb in el-Kab, dating to the Second Intermediate Period.³¹¹² The nurses in these scenes, including those holding wand-shaped objects, are all female.

At the upper right end of the wall (Figure 260),³¹¹³ Bebi and his wife *hkr nswt* "king's ornament" Sobekhnakht face left and are seated, with two daughters standing nearby. Behind Sobekhnakht is a hairdresser and, below the latter, *hnmwt nt hkr nswt sbk-nht ʿzī* "nurse of the king's ornament Sobekhnakht, ʿzī" holds vertically an undulating cobra-headed staff and horizontally a curved object with ends facing downwards. This association of the wand-shaped object with the cobra staff is parallel to that observed on the coffin frieze of Djehutynakht.³¹¹⁴

³¹⁰⁸ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 437-438.

³¹⁰⁹ Such as Book of the Dead 132, see J. Assmann, *Altägyptische Totenliturgien. Band 2. Totenliturgien und Totensprüche in Grabinschriften des Neuen Reiches* (Heidelberg, 2005), 264-268.).

³¹¹⁰ The small fragment of a medical text from Lahun UC 32117 E vso (Collier and Quirke, *UCL Lahun papyri*, 661) has the words "any snake" next to "give birth/birth"; there may be here a reference to snake rods in obstetrics.

³¹¹¹ Gnirs, "Nilpferdstosszähne," 153; See also Altenmüller, "Zaubermesser aus Tübingen," 37.


³¹¹² Wildung, *L'age d'or*, fig. 85; W. Wreszinski, *Bericht über die photographische Expedition von Kairo bis Wadi Haifa Zwecks Abschluss der Materialsammlung für meinen Atlas zur Altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte* (Halle, 1927), 78f, pl. 36; LD IV, 52ff.

³¹¹³ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.6; Altenmüller, "Totengluaben," 131, n. 2; Wreszinski, *Bericht*, pl. 36.

³¹¹⁴ See § 6.3.2.2.1.



Figure 260 - Tomb of Bebi, back wall, upper right. Image from Wreszinski, *Bericht*, pl. 36 (upper).

To the left of this scene, below the inscription, are two registers of right-facing figures (Figure 261), separated and identified in vertical columns of hieroglyphic inscriptions.³¹¹⁵ In the upper register and right part of the lower register, five sons of Bebi stand, each followed by his wet-nurse () . The left part of the lower register depicts food and drink labeled as *ht pt df* *ꜥw* "offerings and victuals."

³¹¹⁵ Wildung, *Âge d'or*, fig. 85; LD IV, 53. Wreszinski, *Bericht*, pl. 36 (upper) only shows two of these sons.



Figure 261 - Tomb of Bebi, back wall, upper middle scene. Image from Wildung, *Âge d'or*, fig. 85.

At the upper left end of the back wall (Figure 262),³¹¹⁶ Bebi and Sebekhnakht, again seated, faced right. The scene placed a papyriform-handle mirror and either a baboon or monkey holding an unguent vase under the chair. Before the couple, two registers of women stood facing to the left, with the front two identified as daughters. The second two figures each held a curved object in front of their faces and a cobra-headed undulating staff diagonally across their bodies. Inscriptions identified these two attendant figures as *mn^ct nbw-m-ḥb* "wet-nurse Nubemheb" (upper register) and *mn^ct sbk-nḥt-wꜣd* "wet-nurse Sobekhnakhtwadj" (lower register). Similarly, a larger figure, "female guard" (𓆎𓅓𓏏𓏏) of Sobekhnakht, stood behind the couple and holds the same two items. A food-bearer sat behind her. Below them stood two women facing right, *mn^ct.f nbt-ît* "his wet-nurse Nebetit" (front) and *ḥnmt.f b^ckt* "his nurse Baket" (back), each holding the same curved object as the other nurses.

³¹¹⁶ Altenmuller, "Totenglauben," 131, n. 4.

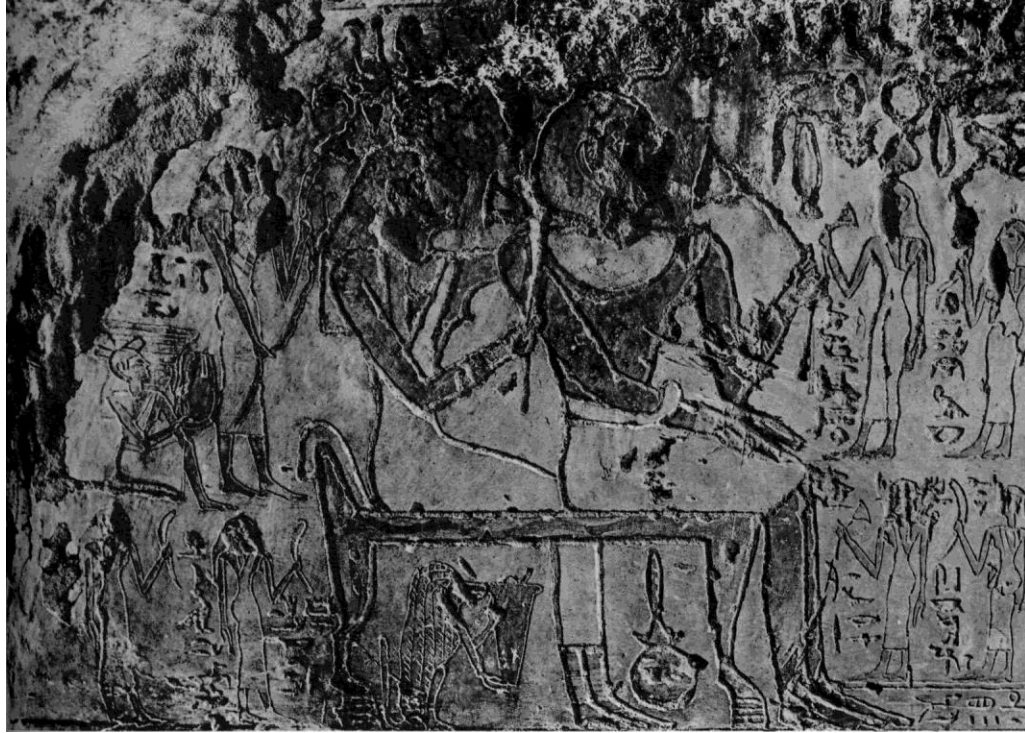


Figure 262 - Tomb of Bebi, back wall, upper left scene. Image from Wreszinski, *Bericht*, pl. 36 (lower).

Previous scholarship had repeatedly cited the scenes from the tomb of Bebi as evidence for their use by nurses,³¹¹⁷ but Hubai had warned against assuming too readily this identification for the curve-topped baton, noting in particular the different shape, with thinner downward end, and the difference in position, as compared with the depiction of round-ended objects, held with both ends down, in the chapel of Djehutyhotep at Deir el-Bersha.³¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, wet-nurses were present in both the Djehutyhotep and the Bebi scene, and, in the latter, the nurse of Sobekhnakht held her curved object in the same horizontal position attested at Deir Bersha. Likewise, the two chapels attest only to women attendants as holders of the two types of object. Thus, on present evidence, the el-Kab scenes appear as evidence for a specific use of wands by nurses of two categories (*mn't*, *hnmt*), to protect the wife, sons and daughters of a senior military officer,³¹¹⁹

³¹¹⁷ Ex: Altenmüller, "Totenglauben," 131; Altenmüller, "Ein Zaubermesser aus Tübingen," 37.

³¹¹⁸ Hubai, "Der zerbrochene Zauberstab," 179.

³¹¹⁹ Altenmüller, "Zu den Feindbildern," 75; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 443.

which fits the elite context of their parallel in the chapel of Djehutyhotep. It is notable that the wand-shaped object held by the nurses and female guards appeared in use well after the birth and childhood of their charges, which indicates that the protection the object offered may extend outside this period, including rebirth to the afterlife.³¹²⁰ The association of these nurses with snake staves is also notable, indicating that these objects were not just symbols for divinity.³¹²¹ Likewise, the scenes provide further evidence of women as magical practioners without necessarily requiring a male priest, continuing the Old Kingdom notion of midwives if not the actual title itself.³¹²²

6.3.2.2.3 Amduat Scenes

The other depictions all came from various portions of the Amduat, as first illustrated in king's tombs of the mid-18th Dynasty.³¹²³ While the objects themselves don't resemble the actual wands as closely as the above scenes, the iconographic parallels between the wands and figures in the Amduat³¹²⁴ makes the possibility of the objects being wands more compelling.

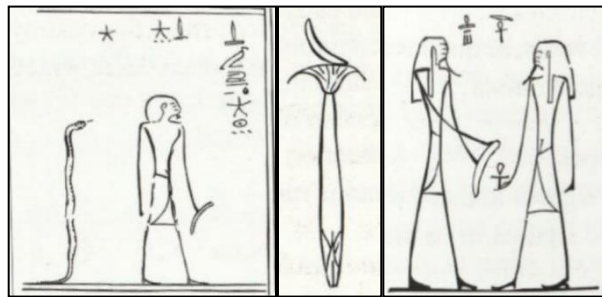


Figure 263 (left) – “Navigator of Hours,” Amduat, Hour 1. From tomb of Thutmose III. Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.8.
Figure 264 (middle) – “Great of Power,” Amduat, Hour 3. From tomb of Thutmose III. Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.10.
Figure 265 (right) - Detail from Amduat, Hour 4. From tomb of Thutmose III. Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 5.9.

³¹²⁰ Altenmuller, "Ein Zaubermesser aus Tübingen," 37; Altenmuller, "Totenglauben," 131.

³¹²¹ For more on snake wands, see above, § 2.6.

³¹²² For more on magic practioners concerning birth, see above, § 5.2.3.

³¹²³ E. Hornung, *Die Unterweltsbücher der Ägypter* (Zürich and Munich, 1989), C. Manassa, *The Late Egyptian Underworld: sarcophagi and related texts from the Nectanebid Period* (Wiesbaden, 2007).

³¹²⁴ See below, § 6.3.3.

In the first hour of the Amduat (Figure 263), a male human figure on the right end of the middle register labelled *d3j wnw* "navigator of the hours" held a curved object with rounded ends.³¹²⁵ The figure held the object with concave side forward and more rounded end facing up. Hubai had identified this figure as the opener of all the processions accompanying the sun-god through the Amduat.³¹²⁶ Hornung had considered the object as a worked wand:³¹²⁷ "ein kurzen, leicht gekrümmten "Zauberstab", wie er sich seit dem MR mit eingeritzten, magisch wirksamen Figuren als Grabbeigabe findet." The relevant inscription for this part of the scene read, "What you deprive is the night; what you bring is the day. You are with that god who passes through the hours and you stay in the barque of Khepri."³¹²⁸ From the context, the device held in the hands by the "Navigator of Hours" was likely to have been an instrument used to protect the sun god during his nightly journey in the underworld.³¹²⁹

While Hubai had asked whether the presence of the form on these New Kingdom sources should not lead us to revise the Middle Kingdom date for the worked wands,³¹³⁰ scholarship had suggested a possibly Middle Kingdom origin of the Amduat.³¹³¹ Quirke had suggested instead that the motif might be taken as evidence in support of a Middle Kingdom date for the Amduat,³¹³² though the wands continued in use in the early New Kingdom. It is also notable that

³¹²⁵ Hornung, *Amduat* I, 11, no. 63; II, 24.

³¹²⁶ Hubai, "Der zerbrochene Zauberstab," 180.

³¹²⁷ Hornung, *Amduat* II, 24, no. 63.

³¹²⁸ Hornung, *Amduat* II, 33.

³¹²⁹ Altenmüller, "Ein Zaubermesser aus Tübingen," 38.

³¹³⁰ Hubai, "Der zerbrochene Zauberstab," 180, n. 60.

³¹³¹ See, ex: Roberson, "The early history of "New Kingdom" netherworld iconography," 427-445; U. Rößler-Köhler, "Königliche Vorstellungen zu Grab und Jenseits im Mittleren Reich, Teil I, ein 'Gottesbegräbnis' des Mittleren Reiches in königlichem Kontext: Amduat, 4. und 5. Stunde," in *Das frühe ägyptische Königtum: Akten des 2. Symposiums zur ägyptischen Königsideologie in Wien, 24.-26.9.1997*, ed. R. Gundlach and W. Seipel (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), 82-85; J. Wegner, "The tomb of Senwosret III at Abydos: Considerations on the Origins and Development of the Royal Amduat-Tomb," in *Archaism and Innovation: Studies in the Culture of Middle Kingdom Egypt*, ed. D.P. Silverman et al. (New Haven; Philadelphia, 2009), 103-169; D. Werning, "Linguistic dating of the Netherworld Books attested in the New Kingdom: a critical review," in *Dating Egyptian literary texts*, ed. G. Moers et al. (Hamburg, 2013), 237-281.

³¹³² Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 445.

the object held by the “navigator of hours” had this form only in the tombs of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II, and is replaced by other objects in later tombs.³¹³³ The use of the curved object in the earlier tombs may suggest another continuation of Middle Kingdom iconography.³¹³⁴

A highly uncertain parallel occurred in the third hour (Figure 264), where an object with both ends rounded, this time at a diagonal, concave long edge to right, sat atop a papyrus scepter or column.³¹³⁵ The caption above identified the object alone or it and the scepter as *wr ḥkꜣw* "great of power." This term occurred as an epithet for various deities, and for one or more of the utensils in the equipment for the ritual of Opening the Mouth and Eyes.³¹³⁶ Beside the concept *wꜣḏ* "to be green", the papyrus scepter/column evoked the goddess Wadjet, one of the aggressive goddesses who occurred on the worked wands.³¹³⁷ However, the meaning and identification of the curved object in this scene remains particularly unclear.

A round-ended object similar to that from the first hour appeared at the fourth hour in the Amduat (Figure 265), one of the pivotal scenes preceding the approach to the reunion of the sun god to the body of Osiris. In the middle register, a bearded human figure labelled *ḥt pw* "contented (?)" held it forward in both hands, with concave side to front. He appears to be offering the item to three male and one female human figures, each holding an *ꜥnh* in an outstretched hand. The inscription names three male figures as *sꜣm ꜥnh* "leader of life" or "commander", and the female *nt ꜥnh* "lady of life."³¹³⁸ The reference to the *wḏꜣt*-eye in the name of figure no. 314 echoes the presence earlier on the same register of an eye labeled *skr* "Sokar" held by an ibis-headed human-bodied god named *wꜣsw* "raiser" and a falcon-headed human-

³¹³³ Hubai, "Der zerbrochene Zauberstab," 180; Hornung, *Amduat* II, 24 knife in Sety I tomb, snake-shaped staff in Ramses VI tomb.

³¹³⁴ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 445.

³¹³⁵ Hornung, *Amduat* II, 48, no. 204.

³¹³⁶ E. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual* (ÄA 3; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1960), 6, 19-20.

³¹³⁷ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 445.

³¹³⁸ Hornung, *Amduat* I, 72, nos. 312-316; II, 88.

bodied god named as ꜥw-ꜥ "with extended arm."³¹³⁹ The motif of the baboon holding an eye, which occurred in the worked wands and apotropaic rods,³¹⁴⁰ may have denoted this theme of the return of the healthy eye by the power of Thoth.³¹⁴¹

6.3.3 A Couple of Notes on Wand Iconography

6.3.3.1 Human Enemies

Among the most dangerous enemies to be destroyed on the wands are human men. While the dress of some of them identify them as foreigners, namely Libyans and Asiatics, others may be Egyptian rebels. While a Nubian cannot be identified on extant wands, Altenmüller had noted that the known role of Nubians in magic make their inclusion as enemies to be destroyed by the wand deity-demons highly likely.³¹⁴² The range of different types of human foes is in line with the various post-birth spells in P. Berlin 3027,³¹⁴³ with foreigners, dead people, and generalized foes included as possible threats.

Libyans occurred on several wands, all attacked by lions.³¹⁴⁴ Such a motif is parallel to the scenes of the striking of the enemies in the pyramid complexes of the Old Kingdom, where

³¹³⁹ Hornung, *Amduat*, I, 71, nos.306-308; II, 87; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 445.

³¹⁴⁰ For latter, see next chapter.

³¹⁴¹ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 445.

³¹⁴² Altenmüller, "Zu den Feindbildern," 77, 80; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, 16; Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 151; Y. Koenig, "La Nubie dans les textes magiques 'L'inquiétante étrangeté'," *RdE* 38 (1987): 105.

³¹⁴³ See in § 5.2.4.4.1-2. For foreigners, see spells D and E; for dead people, see spells B-D, N, P, and Q-T; for more general enemies, see spells M, O, and V.

³¹⁴⁴ Louvre E 2614 + MMA 26.7.1288a-b (standing lion): Quirke, "Apotropaic Wand," in *Ancient Egypt Transformed*, 199-200; Baltimore WAM 71510; MMA 15.3.197 VS; and probably London UC 15917 (Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, v. II, 66-67; Legge, "Magic Ivories," (1905), 299-300, Abb. 47.

the king, as a sphinx or a griffin, stepped down Libyan and Asiatic enemies.³¹⁴⁵ However, in the former, only the sphinx and the griffin attacked the Libyan enemies, unlike the wands.³¹⁴⁶

The Asiatic enemy on magic wand Louvre E 2614 + MMA 26.7.1288 a-b is identifiable via the characteristic mushroom-shaped hairstyle and pointed chin-beard.³¹⁴⁷ The hippopotamus deity assaulted this figure, depicted in a kneeling position and with arms tied behind his back.

Another category of human enemy, depicted without clear ethnic identity, may be Egyptian rebels. Some were simply severed heads that lay before a crocodile.³¹⁴⁸ Others were entire persons attacked by the protective deities. While one wand depicted the hippopotamus deity attacking the rebel,³¹⁴⁹ the three other wands³¹⁵⁰ so far known illustrate rebels showed felines on the attack.³¹⁵¹

6.3.3.2 Threshold Deities of the Solar Entourage

While some of the wands have no decoration or only animal-heads carved on the ends, the vast majority contain series of animal-deity-demon figures.³¹⁵² These scenes were characterized by “threshold-crossing” animals from the high desert and marshes, as well as figures associated with the sun god and specific birth deities.³¹⁵³ While the animals in nature

³¹⁴⁵ O. Bates, *The Eastern Libyans: An Essay* (London: 1914), 122-127; D. Stockfisch, "Bemerkungen zu sog. 'libyschen Familie'," in *Wege öffnen: Festschrift für Rolf Gundlach zum 65. Geburtstag* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1996), 315-325; S. Schoske, *Das Erschlagen der Feinde: Ikonographie und Stilistik der Feindvernichtung im alten Ägypten I* (PhD. Diss., Heidelberg University, 1982), 365-401 with parallel passages.

³¹⁴⁶ Berlin ÄM 14207, Cairo CG 9435, London UC 16384, MMA 32.8.4 Rs. Altenmüller, "Zu den Feindbildern," 79.

³¹⁴⁷ Altenmüller, "Zu den Feindbildern," 79; R. Schiestl, "The statue of an Asiatic man from Tell el-Dab'a, Egypt," *ÄgLev* 16 (2006): 173-185; see also N. Kanawati and L. Evans, *Beni Hassan I: The Tomb of Khnumhotep II* (Oxford: The Australian Centre for Egyptology Reports 36, 2014), Taf. 129.

³¹⁴⁸ Altenmüller, "Zu den Feindbildern," 80.

³¹⁴⁹ MMA 15.3.197 VS.

³¹⁵⁰ Berlin ÄM 14207 Rs, MMA 15.3.197 Rs, Louvre E 20611.

³¹⁵¹ Altenmüller, "Zu den Feindbildern," 81.

³¹⁵² For more detail on individual motifs, see § 4.2 above.

³¹⁵³ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 574; Altenmüller, "Schützdämonen," 62.

typically co-occurred during the high summer drought, when the desert dwelling animals came to the marsh for water, it is unlikely the wands were used for the season. Instead, the animals of the season were invoked to express the uncertainties of birth and infancy, which were highly precarious with high infant mortality.³¹⁵⁴ This threshold concept likewise occurred in fertility-test spells 198 in P. Berlin 3038 and 6 in P. Carlsberg VIII, which likely had Middle Kingdom precedent.³¹⁵⁵

The scenes on the wands were highly variable, with almost no two wands depicting the same sequence. However, the main figures of the wands were relatively consistent, namely Aha/Bes, Ipet/Taweret, the striding lion, griffin, serpent-necked panther, and head of a jackal. Other figures included frogs, felines, turtles, crocodiles, snakes, sun disks, and double-lions. Analysis of the figures indicates that these figures belonged to the entourage of the sun god as he passed through the underworld at night. This group were variously called “Followers of Re,”³¹⁵⁶ “situated in his following,”³¹⁵⁷ or the “Lords of Justice”³¹⁵⁸ who destroy evildoers. On some wands, the magical formula simply referred to the figures as “the protections” 𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏 ,³¹⁵⁹ “the many protections” $\text{𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏} \text{𓂏𓂏} \text{𓂏𓂏} \text{𓂏𓂏}$,³¹⁶⁰ “those many protections” $\text{nn} \text{𓂏𓂏} \text{𓂏𓂏} \text{𓂏𓂏}$,³¹⁶¹ or “those gods” $\text{nn} \text{𓂏𓂏}$.³¹⁶² Other images, such as rebels,³¹⁶³ depicted the enemies of the sun god, frequently

³¹⁵⁴ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 575.

³¹⁵⁵ See above in § 5.2.4.1.

³¹⁵⁶ CT III, 127.

³¹⁵⁷ CT VII, 2371.

³¹⁵⁸ CT I, 252a.

³¹⁵⁹ Berlin 14207c; Brussels E 6361.

³¹⁶⁰ Berlin 14207a; MMA 08.200.19; Louvre E 3614 + MMA 26.7.1288; Kofler A 100.

³¹⁶¹ BM 65439.

³¹⁶² Cairo CG 9436.

³¹⁶³ MMA 15.3.197; Louvre E 3614 + MMA 26.7.1288a-b; UC OdU 37/14; Baltimore WAG 71.510; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 141. For symbolism of the king crushing rebels and Asiatics, see for example PT § 1837; Borchardt, *S'ahu-re* II, pl. 20; *Urk.* IV, 223; *Urk.* V, 7; Newberry and Griffith, *Beni Hasan* I, pl. 7; II, pl. 4, 5, 24.

beheaded, crushed, or bitten by the protective demons. The child/deceased would thus be equated with the sun god, successfully being born/reborn despite the dangers.

The identification of the child with the newborn sun god was in order to harness the power of his entourage,³¹⁶⁴ since the child represented him in ritual, so the sun god himself almost never appears, except in hypostasis.³¹⁶⁵ Instead, occasional inscriptions from the wands described the entourage as *z3.w*, “protective beings” or *ntr.w*.³¹⁶⁶ The wands served as microcosms, which can be activated magically.³¹⁶⁷ A few of these demons had solar associations through the local cult, while the origins of others are less certain.³¹⁶⁸ Some of these figures were first represented in the Book of Two Ways, protecting paths, doors, and furnishings of the afterlife.³¹⁶⁹ This threshold concept in material culture appears to have been a Middle Kingdom feature, with the New Kingdom iconography focused more on life-related themes such as birth-specific deities, convolvulus plants, beds, and women and children.

6.2.4 Conclusions

From the evidence discussed above, the wands served elite women and children from the late Middle Kingdom through the early New Kingdom. The recent dating by Quirke, in addition to tomb scenes depicting the objects, indicate a gradual phase-out of the wands, instead of a sharp break between the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom. The nurse scenes indicate that female wet-nurses wielded these objects, in addition to serpent staffs,³¹⁷⁰ in magic rites to protect women and children. Likewise, if the Amduat scenes indeed depicted the wands, they would provide

³¹⁶⁴ Janssen and Janssen, *Growing up in ancient Egypt*, 9; Roberson, “The early history of ‘New Kingdom’ netherworld iconography,” 436, n. 70; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 187.

³¹⁶⁵ Roberson, “Netherworld iconography,” 436, n. 71: E.g. as a scarab, solar disc, cat, etc. (see Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 171-5); Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 29.

³¹⁶⁶ Roberson, “Netherworld iconography,” 436; Altenmüller, *Apotropaia* I, 136.

³¹⁶⁷ Vink, “Principles of Apotropaic Magic,” 14.

³¹⁶⁸ Roberson, “Netherworld iconography,” 436.

³¹⁶⁹ Roberson, “Netherworld iconography,” 436; Hermesen, *Zwei Wege des Jenseits*, 137.

³¹⁷⁰ See above, § 2.6.

further evidence of the shift of most of the figure entourage into a more strictly funerary function during the New Kingdom. The tomb scenes depicting the wands in the bedroom, in addition to the bedroom objects with the same motives, demonstrated that the apotropaic imagery was a type of bedroom iconography. It would serve as basis for the New Kingdom bedroom motif, wherein the focus was on the more directly birth-related deities and the bed itself.

Of the apotropaia, the wands exhibited some of the greatest continuity of use. In contrast, the so-called “baby feeding cups,” continued in form into the New Kingdom, while they did not illustrate the imagery for as long. While the wands, at least during their initial use, belonged to women, the cups occurred frequently in the burials of infants. The wands would thus serve during both childbirth and the post-partum period, while the cups would only function after labor. In their final contexts, both objects belonged primarily to the funerary sphere.

6.4 Baby Feeding Cups

Another object possibly related to the care of infants are small cups, almost all with a spout. Most of these cups occurred in pottery, though there are some examples in limestone and one in faience. Several of these cups bore painted or relief imagery that is remarkably similar to that of the wands. Of forty-nine so far known such cups, twenty-seven date roughly from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom, one from the Neolithic Period,³¹⁷¹ one from the 1st Dynasty,³¹⁷² five from the Late Period,³¹⁷³ and fifteen from the Ptolemaic to Roman Periods.³¹⁷⁴ Based on their small size, the imagery on a few, and their occurrence in the burials of infants,

³¹⁷¹ UC70119: Marshall, *Maternité*, 186, pl. 42a; Marshall, “Nurture,” 56.

³¹⁷² Manchester Museum website (accessed 7/30/2017): <http://harbour.man.ac.uk/mmcustom/Display.php?irn=100293&QueryPage=%2Fmmcustom%2FEgyptQuery.php>.

³¹⁷³ Boston MFA 20.4392-6. From Museum of Fine Arts online catalogue (search term “feeding cup”), accessed 7/31/2017.

³¹⁷⁴ Boston MFA 23-1-191, 22-12-26, 23-3-439, 23-2-97A, 24.3182-24.3192. From Museum of Fine Arts online catalogue (search term “feeding cup”), accessed 7/31/2017.

much of the previous scholarship had assumed that Egyptians used these items for feeding infants.³¹⁷⁵ However, there has been no residue analysis to confirm this theory,³¹⁷⁶ and Marshall had recently doubted that many of these would have been suitable for such a purpose.³¹⁷⁷ Alternative uses include delivering medicine and/or serving a ritual function, or some may simply be lamps. Whichever way these cups functioned, most were predominantly associated with children in both tombs and burials under houses.

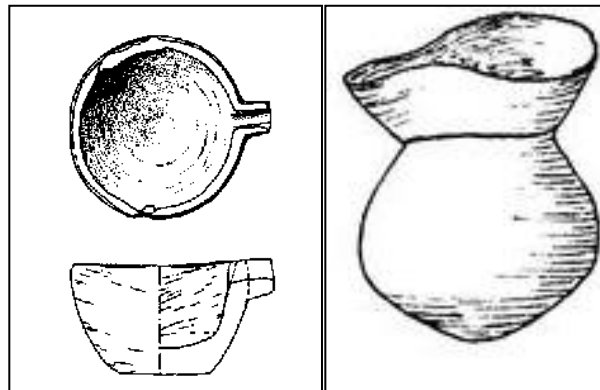


Figure 266 (left) - Cup Elephantine 18608H-3. Image from Von Pilgrim, *Elephantine XVIII*, fig. 141(a).

Figure 267 (right) – UC 18627a. Image from Petrie, *KGH*, pl. XIV.18.

³¹⁷⁵ Petrie, *Kahun*, 45; Petrie, *Qurneh*, 13; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 247; Bourriau, *Umm el-Gaab*, 68-69; Patch, "Baby's Feeding Cup," in Friedman, *Gifts of the Nile*, 207, Cat. 67; Allen, *Art of Medicine*, 11; S. Quirke, "Baby Feeding Cup," in *Egypt Transformed*, 202, Cat. 133; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 332, 338, 343, 356, 371, 383, 393, 394, 413-4.

³¹⁷⁶ Szpakowska ("Infancy," 889) notes that the Manchester Museum has selected samples for organic/isotope geochemical analysis of lipid remains to determine their contents.

³¹⁷⁷ A. Marshall, "The nurture of children in ancient Egypt," *GM* 247 (2015): 56-57; Marshall, *Maternité*, 186-189.

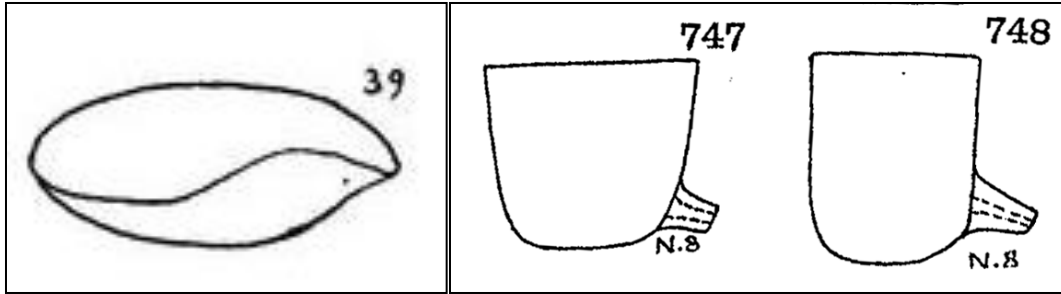


Figure 268 (left) - Manchester EGY818. Image from Petrie, *KGH*, pl. XX.39.
Figure 269 (right) – UC 19082-4. Image from Petrie, *Qurneh*, pl. XLII.747-748.

6.4.1 Context

The cups are notable for occurring in both tomb and domestic contexts (Table 26). From the Middle Kingdom, ~ 63.2% appeared in town sites, especially Lahun (Figures 267-8), while ~21.1% surfaced from tombs. All the preserved cups had spouts on the rim except UC16644, which did not have a spout. Of these Middle Kingdom cups, archaeologists found five from contexts known to be a child’s grave or burial: Elephantine 18603-H3 (Figure 266), Manchester EGY 413-414, UC 18627a (Figure 267), and MMA 44.4.4. Interestingly, the latter occurred in the same basket as a blue faience crocodile MMA 07.227.19.³¹⁷⁸ The Middle Kingdom cups tended to occur primarily in the Fayum area close to the Itjettawy, with just three from outside that area in Southern Egypt. In contrast, the New Kingdom cups were more evenly spread in both town and tomb sites from Middle Egypt and Southern Egypt. Three cups from Qurna (Figure 269) appear to have been a local variation, with the spout located further down the vessel. Overall, the New Kingdom cups appear to have been a continuation of the Middle Kingdom and earlier.

Table 26 – MK-NK Feeding Cups

Site	Location	Provenance	Date	Type	Size	Material	Object
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³¹⁷⁸ For this figurine, see below, §4.4.

Tomb	el-Mahasna	Tomb M470	OK-11D.	spouted cup		Pottery, light red	Penn E9711 ³¹⁷⁹
Tomb	Lisht	North, cemetery west of Senwosret (758), Pit 848	e-m.12D.	spouted cup	5x7.8cm	Pottery	MMA 09.180.768c ³¹⁸⁰
Town	Elephantine	House 69a, under Room G (ELEP 91-28)	12D.	spouted cup	4.6cm	Limestone	18608H-3 ³¹⁸¹
Town	Lahun	In box with infant	12D.	spouted jar	8x6.8cm	Pottery	Manchester EGY413 ³¹⁸²
Town	Lahun	In box with infant	12D.	spouted jar	7x5.5cm	Pottery	Manchester EGY414 ³¹⁸³
Town	Lahun	In box with infant	12D.	spouted jar	8x6.7cm	Pottery, brown	UC 18627a ³¹⁸⁴
Town	Lahun	N/A	12D.	spouted cup	6.5x7.9cm	Pottery	Manchester EGY415 ³¹⁸⁵
Town	Lahun	N/A	12D.	spouted cup	5.1x10.2cm	Pottery, red	UC 18616 ³¹⁸⁶
Town	Lahun	N/A	12D.	spouted jar	6.7cm	Pottery, brown	UC 18629 ³¹⁸⁷
Town	Lahun	N/A	12D.	spouted jar	8.8x8.2cm	Pottery, red	Manchester EGY412 ³¹⁸⁸
Town	Lahun	N/A	12D.	spouted cup	4.9x7.7cm	Pottery	Manchester EGY416 ³¹⁸⁹
Town	Lahun	N/A	12D.	spouted cup	4x7cm	Pottery	Manchester EGY418 ³¹⁹⁰
Town	Lahun	N/A	12D.	spouted cup	2.5x8.5cm	Pottery, red	Manchester EGY417 ³¹⁹¹
N/A	N/A	N/A	12D.	spouted dish	6x18.5cm	Pottery, red	UC 18470 ³¹⁹²

³¹⁷⁹ Penn Museum website (accessed 7/31/17): <https://www.penn.museum/collections/object/2167>.

³¹⁸⁰ Hayes, *Scepter I*, 247.

³¹⁸¹ Von Pilgrim, *Untersuchungen*, 132, 320-1.

³¹⁸² Petrie, *Kahun*, 25, pl. XIV, 20; Quirke, *Lahun*, 102.

³¹⁸³ Petrie, *Kahun*, 25, pl. XIV, 18; Quirke, *Lahun*, 102.

³¹⁸⁴ Quirke, *Lahun*, 102; Bourriau, *Umm el-Ga'ab*, 68-69, no. 125; Petrie, *Kahun*, 25, pl. XIV.18; Petrie, *Journal 1895-1896*, 4-11.

³¹⁸⁵ Petrie, *Kahun*, 24, XIII, 89; Griffith, *Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities*, 40.

³¹⁸⁶ Petrie, *Kahun*, 24, pl. XIII, 89.

³¹⁸⁷ Petrie, *Kahun*, 24, pl. XIII, 90 and pl. XIV, 18.

³¹⁸⁸ Petrie, *Kahun*, 24, pl. XIII, 90.

³¹⁸⁹ Griffith, *Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities*, 41.

³¹⁹⁰ Griffith, *Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities*, 41.

³¹⁹¹ Griffith, *Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities*, 41.

³¹⁹² Bourriau, *Umm el-Ga'ab*, 68-69, no. 126.

Tomb	Lisht	North Cemetery	12-13D.	Fragment	3.7cm	Limestone	MMA 15.3.777 ³¹⁹³
Town?	Lisht	"toilet +basket II"	12-1.13D.	spouted cup	3.5x8x4cm	Faience	MMA 44.4.4 ³¹⁹⁴
Tomb	Asasif	East of Pabasa, Radim, Burial 6AX.B15	MK.	spouted cup		Pottery	MMA 19.3.127 ³¹⁹⁵
N/A	N/A	N/A	MK.	Cup	3.3x4.3cm	Limestone	UC 16644 ³¹⁹⁶
N/A	N/A	N/A	MK.	spouted cup		Pottery, Nile B	UC 66705 ³¹⁹⁷
Town	Gurob	Context 24	18-19D.	spouted cup	4.5x16.5cm	Pottery	Manchester EGY818 ³¹⁹⁸
Tomb	Abydos		18D.	spouted cup	6x9.4cm	Pottery	Manchester EGY2980 ³¹⁹⁹
Tomb	Gerzeh		18D.	spouted cup	5.1x15.6cm	Pottery	Manchester EGY5319 ³²⁰⁰
Town	Amarna		18D.	spouted cup	6.2 x 12.9 x 10.8cm	Pottery, red ware	BM EA58630 ³²⁰¹
Town	Gurob		18D.	spouted cup	5x15cm	Pottery	Manchester EGY863 ³²⁰²
Tomb	Qurna		18D.	spouted cup	10cm	Pottery, pink ware	UC 19082 ³²⁰³
Tomb	Qurna		18D.	spouted cup	11.3cm	Pottery, pink ware	UC 19083 ³²⁰⁴

³¹⁹³ Museum website (7/14/17): <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/556893>.

³¹⁹⁴ Marshall, *Maternité*, fig. 8; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 338, 343, 371, 383, 393, 413-4; Quirke, "Feeding Cup," 202, no. 133; D. Patch, "Baby's Feeding Cup," in Friedman, *Gifts of the Nile*, ed. F. Friedman et al. (London, New York: Thames & Hudson, 1998), 207, Cat. 67; Allen, *Art of Medicine*, 30-31; Romano, *Bes-image*, Cat. 58; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 247; Fischer, *Turtles*, Cat. 95; Fischer, "Egyptian turtles," 168 fig. 9.

³¹⁹⁵ Hayes, *Scepter I*, 247.

³¹⁹⁶ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 332, 338 (fig. 4.28), 356, 359 (fig. 4.74), 394 (fig. 4.167), 413-4.

³¹⁹⁷ Petrie museum online catalogue (07/14/2017): <http://petriecat.museums.ucl.ac.uk/detail.aspx>.

³¹⁹⁸ Petrie, *Kahun*, 34, pl. XX, no. 39; Griffith, *Catalogue*, 72.

³¹⁹⁹ Manchester Museum website (accessed 7/27/17):

<http://harbour.man.ac.uk/mmcustom/Display.php?irn=102750&QueryPage=%2Fmmcustom%2FEgyptQuery.php>.

³²⁰⁰ Manchester Museum website (accessed 7/27/17):

<http://harbour.man.ac.uk/mmcustom/Display.php?irn=102750&QueryPage=%2Fmmcustom%2FEgyptQuery.php>.

³²⁰¹ Manchester Museum website (accessed 7/27/17):

<http://harbour.man.ac.uk/mmcustom/Display.php?irn=102750&QueryPage=%2Fmmcustom%2FEgyptQuery.php>.

³²⁰² Griffith, *Catalogue*, 76.

³²⁰³ Petrie, *Qurneh*, 13, pl. XLII.747.

³²⁰⁴ Petrie, *Qurneh*, 13, pl. XLII.748.

Tomb	Qurna		18D.	spouted cup	11.3cm	Pottery, red ware	UC 19084 ³²⁰⁵
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6.4.2 Imagery

Most of the cups had no decoration, with some bearing red slip or paint or an incised line filled with white paint. However, several bore iconography similar to that seen on the wands discussed above. This decoration, in addition to the archaeological association of such objects with infants, suggests Egyptians designed this artifact type for children.

From the Northern Cemetery in Lisht, MMA 15.3.777 (Figure 270) is a fragment of a limestone cup which bears in low relief the image of Ipet. The top half of the figure is preserved. Her figure is schematic, with an undecorated wig down to her shoulders and the crocodile on her back marked by diagonal lines. The imagery on the two other cups indicates that this Ipet-figure would have likely been part of a series of figures going around the cup.



Figure 270 - MMA 15.3.77. Photograph courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Found in a basket possibly associated with a house nearby the cemetery in Lisht, MMA 44.4.4 (Figure 271) bears two similar series of black painted figures running from the side of the

³²⁰⁵ Petrie, *Qurneh*, 13, pl. XLII. Cf. 748.

spout and joining at back. The series runs: turtle, striding lion, snake, serpopard with knife over back, Ipet with *s3* and knife (left) or standing lion biting snake (right), frontal Aha squatting and holding snakes, central frontal figure with lion head (possibly lion-headed child). The turtle was most often a Sethian animal, but can also be interpreted as a beneficial cosmic animal.³²⁰⁶ Indeed, the fact that the turtle occurred on either side of the spout has led Gutbub to assume that the turtle placed there should control the outflow of the liquid.³²⁰⁷ Likewise, the presence of the turtle at the spout may have referred to the mythical precedent of the turtle stopping the watery path of the sun god, here equated with breast milk.³²⁰⁸ As noted by Marshall,³²⁰⁹ this decoration differs greatly from the more typical plant and geometric motifs on food dishes, most closely matching the apotropaic decoration on the wands.³²¹⁰

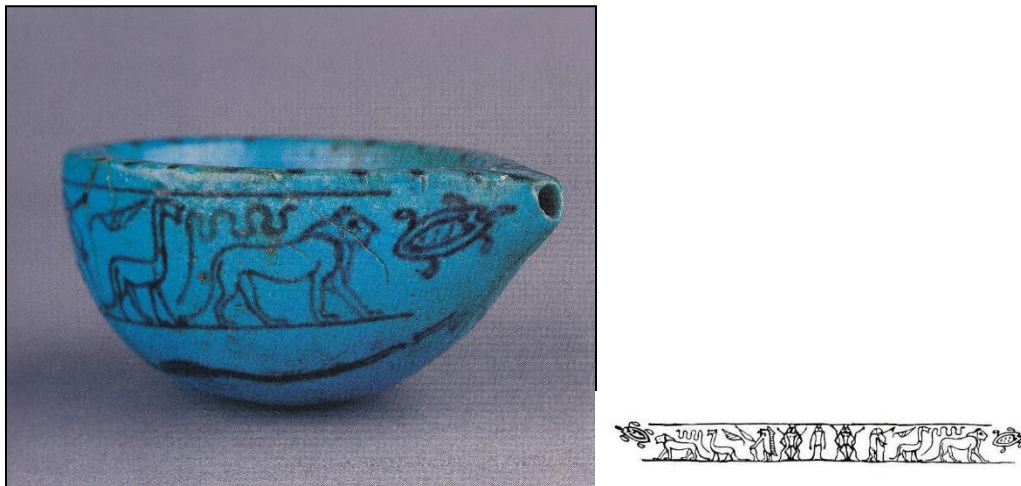


Figure 271 – MMA 44.4.4 and drawing of its decoration. From Friedman, *Gift of the Nile*, 105 and 207 (fig. 48) respectively.

³²⁰⁶ Koenig, *Magie et magiciens*, 92; Marshall, *Maternité*, 188; Marshall, "Nurture," 57.

³²⁰⁷ A. Gutbub, "La tortue animal cosmique bénéfique à l'époque ptolémaïque et romaine," in *Hommages à la mémoire de Serge Sauneron, 1927-1976*, vol 1: *Égypte ptolémaïque*, ed. J. Vercoutter (BdÉ 81; Cairo: IFAO, 1979), 435.

³²⁰⁸ Vink, "Principles of Apotropaic Magic," 15.

³²⁰⁹ Marshall, *Maternité*, 188.

³²¹⁰ Szpakowska, "Infancy," 189; Allen, *Art of Medicine*, 30, Cat. 23.


Though not shaped with a spout like the other cups in discussion, UC 16644 (Figure 272) is relevant for its imagery. The limestone cup bears figures in low relief, including a horned viper on the base. Other figures run on the side of the object in the following sequence: a crocodile above a serpent-necked panther, a griffin with human head between wings, a frontal Aha figure with snakes, an Ipet-figure holding the *ms*-sign ()³²¹¹ a standing lion standing holding a snake. Quirke had noted figures on this cup as parallels to many of those on the wands.³²¹²



Figure 272 – UC 16644. Image Courtesy of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology.

6.4.3 Theories of Use

Much of the previous scholarship on these objects assumed that they were baby feeding cups. Marshall,³²¹³ however, had argued that the uncertain contexts of many of these objects and the size of most of the spouts mean most could not function as infant feeding cups. Instead, others have posited that the cups served a medical/ritual purpose relating to infants and young children. Likewise, some of the cups are burnt, which may indicate that they may have been

³²¹¹ This sign likely is used to represent *ms* “birth.”

³²¹² Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 332, 338, 356, 394, 413-4.

³²¹³ Marshall, “The nurture,” 56-57; Marshall, *Maternité*, 186-189.

simply lamps. As explained below, the available evidence indicates that the objects served a function directly related to the care of infants and young children.

Some of the cups show charring in their interiors,³²¹⁴ which has led the curators of these examples to assume these objects may have been lamps. Indeed, small lamps sometimes had spouts modelled from the rim.³²¹⁵ Yet, this theory does not explain the imagery on some of the cups nor the association with infants. None of the known spells involving infant care involved lamps nor burning material. Likewise, most of the cups don't show charring. It may, therefore, be safe to assume that those cups without extensive charring in their interiors did not serve as lamps.

The majority of scholars have argued that, based on their small sizes, association with burials of infants, and the imagery on some, the cups served as infant feeding cups.³²¹⁶ On that basis, their location in the tombs of infants may have been to ensure the baby would continue to receive proper nourishment in the afterlife.³²¹⁷ While some indeed occurred in the burials of infants, Marshall had noted that many occurred in unclear contexts, either with the tomb owner unknown³²¹⁸ or with the excavator not specifying the findspot of particular objects.³²¹⁹ Likewise, she had argued that the spouts on some would have been too wide to give sufficient control of the liquid flow to safely feed an infant,³²²⁰ though she had given no citations for that assessment.

³²¹⁴ UC18627a, Manchester EGY818, Manchester 5319.

³²¹⁵ Ex: Schiff Giorgini, *Soleb III* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1998), fig. 520.

³²¹⁶ Petrie, *Kahun*, 45; Petrie, *Qurneh*, 13; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 247; Bourriau, *Umm el-Gaab*, 68-69; D. Patch, "Baby's Feeding Cup," in Friedman, *Gifts of the Nile: Ancient Egyptian Faience* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1998), 207, Cat. 67; Fischer, *Turtles*, 33; Allen, *Art of Medicine*, 11; Altenmüller, "Die Schildkröte," 15, 20; Szpakowska, "Infancy," 889-890; S. Quirke, "Baby Feeding Cup," in *Egypt Transformed*, 202, Cat. 133; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 332, 338, 343, 356, 371, 383, 393, 394, 413-4.

³²¹⁷ Szpakowska, "Infancy," 889.

³²¹⁸ Marshall, *Maternité*, 187 and Marshall, "Nurture," 56, citing MMA 09.180.768c.

³²¹⁹ Marshall, *Maternité*, 186; Marshall, "Nurture," 56.

³²²⁰ Marshall, *Maternité*, 186-7 and Marshall, "Nurture," 56-7, citing UC 70119 from the Neolithic Period and MMA 1944.44.4.4.

Comparison with modern sippy cups,³²²¹ however, indicates that the diameters of the spouts of the ancient cups are consistent with the modern cups. If the ancient cups did serve as feeding cups, the mother/nurse would've likely held them, since they lack the handles or grips seen on modern sippy cups, a requirement for such young children. Indeed, the youngest age which a child could use a modern sippy cup appears to be four months, so the ancient devices would probably have been unsuitable for younger infants. This assessment is consistent with the context of the Elephantine cup,³²²² which occurred in the burial of an infant between six and nine months old under the floor of a house.

For at least the faience cup MMA 44.4.4, some scholars had argued that it would be too fancy to serve as a feeding cup. Instead, that cup, and perhaps others, may serve a prophylactic function, either delivering medication or performing a ritual function.³²²³ Patch had based this assessment partly on the context of MMA 44.4.4, which she had considered having operated as a sacred area.³²²⁴ This theory for the cups is consistent with the context and imagery of these objects, particularly for the MMA 44.4.4. However, until scholars complete residue analysis of the cups, this theory remains unproven.

6.4.4 Conclusions

The exact use of the small spouted cups remains uncertain, though their context and imagery indicate an association with infants. Thus, the majority of the cups either served as feeding cups for infants at least four months old and/or functioned in a medical/ritual context considering young children.³²²⁵ While the shape of the cups continued into the New Kingdom,

³²²¹ Measurements derived from representative sample of modern sippy cups for varying age groups taken 7/29/17 from Bye Bye Baby.

³²²² Von Pilgrim, *Untersuchungen*, 132.

³²²³ Allen, *Art of Medicine*, 30-1; Patch, "Baby's Feeding Cup," 207; Marshall, *Maternité*, 188; Marshall, "Nurture," 57.

³²²⁴ Patch, "Baby's Feeding Cup," 207.

³²²⁵ Marshall, *Maternité*, 188-189; Marshall, "Nurture," 57.

the iconography appears to have been more temporally limited. As we have discussed above, the New Kingdom saw a shift to milk vessels that depicted the woman and child.³²²⁶ These later milk vessels likewise more directly illustrate their function holding milk, with the woman frequently nursing. Unlike the cups, faience animal figurines appear largely limited to the late Middle Kingdom and early Second Intermediate Period, reflecting the larger pattern of Egyptian faience production during those periods. Additionally, the cups also seem more specialized than the figurines, with the latter providing more generalized protection. However, the figurines, like the other apotropaia, belonged predominantly in funerary contexts.

6.5 Animal figurines

Similar apotropaic imagery from the wands and baby feeding cups also occurred on figurines. The vast majority of these figures date to the Middle Kingdom to late Second Intermediate Period,³²²⁷ while there are others from the New Kingdom and later. Given the differences in primary material used and context, focus in this section will fall on the Middle Kingdom corpus.³²²⁸

6.5.1 Description

The vast majority of figurines from the Middle Kingdom are of faience, to the point that much of the scholarship had discussed the faience examples as a corpus.³²²⁹ Such figures included humans, fruits and vegetables, animals, and deities Aha/Bes and Ipet/Taweret.³²³⁰ The

³²²⁶ See above, § 3.5.2.

³²²⁷ For the decline of faience figurines in the late Second Intermediate Period, see Miniaci, “Unbroken Stories,” 264.

³²²⁸ The mixed MK-NK and NK animal figurines will be discussed in the book version of this work.

³²²⁹ Some publications do not include figurines of dwarves and females as part of the corpus while Miniaci, “Unbroken Stories,” does. In this work, I mostly consider these types separate from the other faience figurines.

³²³⁰ For the latter two, see §§ 2.2 and 2.5.

animal figurines included hippopotamuses, cows/bovines,³²³¹ dogs, frogs,³²³² baboons, lions, monkeys, snakes, jerboas, birds, crocodiles, hares, rams, goats, and hedgehogs. Artists often carefully decorated faience figurines with a purple-black manganese paint.³²³³ It is notable that almost none of the figurines has an inscription, with the closest an upright lion figure leaning its front paws on a molded *sz*-sign,³²³⁴ mirroring depictions on some of the wands. There are 186 provenanced figurines of faience, wood, mud, and limestone with figures akin to those on apotropaic wands and feeding cups. The most significant types not of birth deities include lions, felines, baboons, and crocodiles.



Figure 273 (left) – Lion figurine RmO EG-ZM2364. Image from Miniaci, “Unbroken Stories,” fig. 15.
Figure 274 (right) – Lion figurines, from Lisht 884 (left) and Abydos D84 (right). Image from Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 4.25.

³²³¹ For cows, see § 2.3.

³²³² For frogs, see § 2.4.

³²³³ A. Kaczmarczyk and R.E.M. Hedges (eds.), *Ancient Egyptian Faience: An analytical Survey of Egyptian Faience from Predynastic to Roman Times* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1983); Miniaci, “Unbroken Stories,” 273.

³²³⁴ Leiden RMO, EG-ZM2364, formerly E.XVIII 280: H. D. Schneider, *Life and Death under the Pharaohs* (Perth: Western Australian Museum, 1997), 105, no. 166; Miniaci, “Unbroken Stories,” 273 and Fig. 15.

Of the 28 so far known lion figurines with provenance (Figures 273-4), a significant number came from Upper Egypt, with about 66.7% of which from Northern Upper Egypt. About 28.6% originated from the Memphis/Fayum region, mainly Lisht North and Lahun. This type appeared primarily in tombs, with only four examples each from townsites and temples. There were two types of lion figurines, which were similar to lion motifs on apotropaia: an upright lion and a recumbent feline.

Table 27 - MK Lion Figurines

Region	Site	Context	Material	Museum No.	Description
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite (?)	Faience	Manchester 168 ³²³⁵	Recumbent
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite (?)	Faience	UC 16679 ³²³⁶	Recumbent
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite (?)	Faience	UC 2423 ³²³⁷	Upright
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht North	Enclosure of tomb of Senwosret (758), Pit 758	Faience	MMA 09.180.2389 ³²³⁸	Amulet (?)
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht North	South of Amenemhat I pyramid, below House A2:4 east, Pit 315	Gl. steatite	MMA 15.3.36 ³²³⁹	Recumbent
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht North	Cemetery south of pyramid below House A1:2, Pit 884	Ivory	MMA 22.1.108 ³²⁴⁰	Upright
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht North	Cemetery south of pyramid, below House A1 :1, Pit 885	Faience	MMA 22.1.178 ³²⁴¹	Upright
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht North	Cemetery south of the pyramid, pit 379, inside tomb of Rehuerdjersen(?), no.384	Egyptian blue	MMA 22.1.66 ³²⁴²	Recumbent

³²³⁵ Petrie, *Kahun, Gurob, and Hawara*, 31, pl. VIII.1; Griffith, *Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities*, 24.

³²³⁶ Petrie, *Kahun, Gurob, and Hawara*, pl. 8; Morföisse and Andreu-Lanoë, *Sésostris III*, 292, cat. 289; Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 141, under no. 416.A.07.99; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, Fig. 341, 4.37.

³²³⁷ Petrie, *Kahun, Gurob, and Hawara*, 31.

³²³⁸ Miniaci, "The Collapse of Faience Figurine Production," 119, n. 57.

³²³⁹ Image accessed from online museum catalogue 6/2018.

³²⁴⁰ Hayes, *Scepter I*, 225; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 338, Fig. 4.25-i.

³²⁴¹ Hornemann, *Types VII*, 1741; Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 140, under no. 416.A.07.94; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 337.

³²⁴² Mace, "The Egyptian Expedition 1920-1," 15, fig. 12.

N. UE	Abydos	Tomb D 84 ³²⁴³	Ivory		Upright
N. UE	Abydos	Tomb E 3	Faience	Ashmolean E 2183 ³²⁴⁴	
N. UE	Abydos	Tomb 352 ³²⁴⁵	Ivory		Upright
N. UE	Abydos	Tomb 416	Faience	Ashmolean E 3275 ³²⁴⁶	Upright
N. UE	Abydos	Tomb 416	Faience	Ashmolean E 3302B ³²⁴⁷	Head of recumbent lion
N. UE	Abydos	Tomb 345 A'07	Faience (?)	Liverpool Garstang 639 ³²⁴⁸	
N. UE	Abydos	Tomb E 1 (shaft 5?)	Faience	Manchester 1229 ³²⁴⁹	Recumbent lion on base
N. UE	Matmar	Tomb 418 ³²⁵⁰	Faience		Lion (?)
Thebes	Asasif	Tomb 74, el-Mandara	Faience		
Thebes	Asasif	C37, Tomb 24, second sifting ³²⁵¹	Faience		Fore-part of reclining lion
Thebes	Ramesseum	Tomb under gallery no. 5	Faience	Manchester 1839 ³²⁵²	Upright
S. UE	Esna	Tomb 181 ³²⁵³	Faience		Lion (?), small.
Levant	Byblos	Obelisk Temple, deposit	Faience		Upright ³²⁵⁴
Levant	Byblos	Obelisk Temple, deposit	Faience		2 lions, recumbent ³²⁵⁵
Nubia	Aniba	Tomb 336	Faience		Recumbent ³²⁵⁶
Nubia	Askut	Settlement area ³²⁵⁷	Faience		Head with paint on the mane and nose

³²⁴³ Randall-MacIver and Mace, *El-Amrah*, pl. 43, 54; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 338, fig. 4.25-ii.

³²⁴⁴ Garstang, *El Arábah*, 25-6, 44.

³²⁴⁵ S. Snape, "Mortuary Assemblages from Abydos" (PhD. diss., University of Liverpool, 1986), 219, notebook entry "small ivory statuette of lion standing", only other find recorded from context is wood figurine of naked female dwarf holding naked male child to breast (Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 122-123, cat. 115).

³²⁴⁶ Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, no. 416.A.07.94, pl. 15; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 337.

³²⁴⁷ Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, no. 416.A.07.99.

³²⁴⁸ Snape, "Mortuary Assemblages," I, 216; II, pl. 20.

³²⁴⁹ Garstang, *El Arábah*, 44; A. Tooley, "Garstang's El Arabah Tomb E.1" in *The World of Middle Kingdom (2000-1500 BC): Contributions on Archaeology, Art, Religion, and Written Sources I*, ed. G. Miniaci and W. Grajetzki (London: MKS 1, 2015), 344, pl. 28.

³²⁵⁰ Brunton, *Matmar*, pls. XXVIII.418, XXXV.31.

³²⁵¹ Carnarvon and Carter, *Five Years' Explorations*, 52 (no image); Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 141, no. 416.A.07.99.

³²⁵² Quibell, *Ramesseum*, pl. 3, no. 5; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 337.

³²⁵³ Downes, *Esna*, The inventory.

³²⁵⁴ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II, 758, nos. 15302; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 337.

³²⁵⁵ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II, 758, nos. 15303-4.

³²⁵⁶ Steindorff, *Aniba I*, 149, pl. 67.

³²⁵⁷ Smith, *Wretched Kush*, 133, fig. 5.32A.

Nubia	Kerma	Tumulus K II, Chapel A	Faience	MFA 13.4229 ³²⁵⁸	Fore-part of recumbent lion
Nubia	Kerma	Tumulus K X, Corridor B, comp. 8- 16 ³²⁵⁹	Faience		Lion fragment (?)
Nubia	Kerma	Tumulus K X, Corridor B, 126 ³²⁶⁰	Faience		Lion fragment (?)

Figurines of felines, all in faience, primarily depicted the animal crouching and ready to strike, likely referring to the wild feline seen on apotropaia and amulets.³²⁶¹ Interestingly, provenanced examples occurred predominantly in temples, eighteen from the Hathor sanctuary at Serabit el-Khadim and seven from Byblos out of thirty-two total figures.

Table 28 - MK Feline Figurines

Region	Site	Context	Material	Museum No.	Description
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun		Faience	Manchester 166 ³²⁶²	Head
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht North	South Cemetery, south of tomb of Nakht (493) ³²⁶³	Faience		
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht South	Pit 6L, Brick Vault	Faience	MMA 24.1.52 ³²⁶⁴	Crouching
N. UE	Abydos	Tomb 416	Faience	Liverpool University E 160 ³²⁶⁵	Crouching, spotted markings deep purple to brown
N. UE	Abydos	Tomb 416 ³²⁶⁶	Faience	location unknown	Crouching

³²⁵⁸ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 174; Friedman (ed.), *Gifts of the Nile*, 169, cat. no. 182.

³²⁵⁹ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 174.

³²⁶⁰ Reisner, *Kerma IV-V*, 174.

³²⁶¹ See § 6.2.4 above.

³²⁶² Griffith, *Catalogue*, 24; Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 144, under no. 416.A.07.105.

³²⁶³ Bourriau, "Patterns of Change in Burial Customs during the Middle Kingdom," in *Middle Kingdom Studies*, ed. S. Quirke (New Malden, 1991), 17.

³²⁶⁴ Arnold, *Pyramid Complex*, 79, pl. 87, no. 240; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 224, fig. 140; Hornemann, *Types VI*, no. 1600.

³²⁶⁵ Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, no. 416.A.07.104.

³²⁶⁶ Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, no. 416.A.07.105.

S. UE	Esna	Tomb 133 ³²⁶⁷	Faience		
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 915 ³²⁶⁸	Spotted markings painted in black.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 916 ³²⁶⁹	Head of spotted cat.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 917 ³²⁷⁰	Spotted markings painted in black, head missing.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 918 ³²⁷¹	Spotted markings painted in black, front part only.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 919 ³²⁷²	Spotted markings painted in black, front paws only.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 920 ³²⁷³	Spotted markings painted in black, torso and hind legs only.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 921 ³²⁷⁴	Spotted markings painted in black, front part only.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 922 ³²⁷⁵	Head of a cat.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 923 ³²⁷⁶	Spotted markings painted in black.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 924 ³²⁷⁷	Striped markings painted in black.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 925 ³²⁷⁸	Head missing.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 926 ³²⁷⁹	Striped markings painted in black, hind legs only.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 927 ³²⁸⁰	Striped markings painted in black, broken.

³²⁶⁷ Downes, *Esna*, The inventory.

³²⁶⁸ Image accessed from museum online catalogue 7/2018.

³²⁶⁹ Image accessed from museum online catalogue 7/2018.

³²⁷⁰ Petrie, *Researches in Sinai*, 148, pl. 153.10 (shown with Manchester 922).

³²⁷¹ Petrie, *Researches in Sinai*, 148, pl. 153.6.

³²⁷² Image accessed from museum online catalogue 7/2018.

³²⁷³ Image accessed from museum online catalogue 7/2018.

³²⁷⁴ Petrie, *Researches in Sinai*, 148, pl. 153.8.

³²⁷⁵ Petrie, *Researches in Sinai*, 148, pl. 153.10 (shown with Manchester 917).

³²⁷⁶ Image accessed from museum online catalogue 7/2018.

³²⁷⁷ Petrie, *Researches in Sinai*, 148, pl. 153.11.

³²⁷⁸ Image accessed from museum online catalogue 7/2018.

³²⁷⁹ Image accessed from museum online catalogue 7/2018.

³²⁸⁰ Petrie, *Researches in Sinai*, 148, pl. 153.7; Miniaci, "Unbroken Stories," Fig. 11.

Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 930 ³²⁸¹	Details painted in black, feet only.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 930a-b ³²⁸²	Plaque with cat drawn in black worn away.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 931 ³²⁸³	Details painted in black, front paws only.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 932 ³²⁸⁴	Details painted in black, front paws only.
Oases/Deserts	Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience	Manchester 933 ³²⁸⁵	Details painted in black, front paws only.
Levant	Byblos	Obelisk Temple, deposit	Faience		7 cats ³²⁸⁶
Nubia	Kerma	K 3901, debris ³²⁸⁷	Faience		Fore-paws only

Baboons similarly occurred in high concentrations in tombs, with about 81% coming from the Temple of Obelisks in Byblos alone. Of those from Egypt, most occurred in tombs from the Memphis/Fayum region. Baboons are a very widely attested type, with seventy-nine provenanced examples, and appeared in two main forms: seated on hind legs (Figure 275) or standing with forepaws downward. There are at least two known figurines with a different posture:³²⁸⁸ (a) with right forepaw to face;³²⁸⁹ (b) with head looking up, and baby baboon on lap.³²⁹⁰

³²⁸¹ Image accessed from museum online catalogue 7/2018.

³²⁸² Online database (accessed 1/3/2018).

³²⁸³ Image accessed from museum online catalogue 7/2018.

³²⁸⁴ Image accessed from museum online catalogue 7/2018.

³²⁸⁵ Image accessed from museum online catalogue 7/2018.

³²⁸⁶ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II, 751-3, 757, nos. 15228, 15230-35.

³²⁸⁷ Reisner, *Excavations at Kerma IV-V*, 174.

³²⁸⁸ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 365-6.

³²⁸⁹ MMA 08.200.35.

³²⁹⁰ Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 165, pl. 23, Terrace group (unprovenanced).

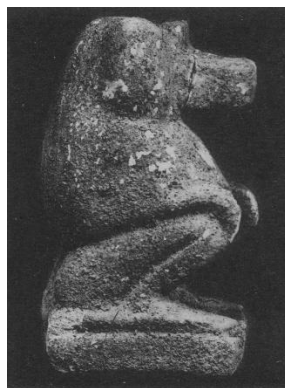


Figure 275 – Baboon figurine from Byblos. Image from Dunand, *Fouilles des Byblos II*, pl. cviii, no. 15194.

Table 29 - MK Baboon Figurines

Region	Site	Context	Material	Museum No.	Description
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite	Wood	UC7398 ³²⁹¹	Seated with bronze tail, fixed to a peg
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht		Faience	MMA 08.200.32 ³²⁹²	Squatting on base
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht North	Enclosure of tomb of Senwosret (758), Pit 805	Faience	MMA 08.200.33 ³²⁹³	Upright
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht North	Enclosure of tomb of Senwosret (758), Pit 805	Faience	MMA 08.200.35 ³²⁹⁴	Squatting on base, hand to mouth
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht North	Cemetery south of pyramid, below House A1 :1, Pit 885	Faience	MMA 15.3.886 ³²⁹⁵	
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht North	South of Amenemhat I pyramid, below House A2:2, Pit 304	Faience	MMA 15.3.8 ³²⁹⁶	Upper part only; spots and details painted black.

³²⁹¹ Accessed museum online catalog 3/2017.

³²⁹² Hayes, *Scepter I*, 224, fig. 140.

³²⁹³ Hayes, *Scepter I*, 224, fig. 140.

³²⁹⁴ Hayes, *Scepter I*, 224, fig. 140; Hornemann, *Types VII*, no. 1788; Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 140, under no. 416.A.07.95.

³²⁹⁵ Miniaci, "Collapse," 119, n. 57. Number from online catalogue (accessed 7/2018).

³²⁹⁶ Miniaci, "Collapse," 119, n. 57. Number from online catalogue (accessed 7/2018).

Memphis/Fayum	Riqqeh	Tomb 240	Faience	location unknown ³²⁹⁷	Squatting on base
N. UE	Abydos	Tomb 416	Faience	Ashmolean E 3299 ³²⁹⁸	Squatting on base
N. UE	Abydos	Tomb 416	Faience	location unknown ³²⁹⁹	Squatting on base
Thebes	Ramesseum	Tomb under gallery no. 5	Faience	Manchester 1835 ³³⁰⁰	Squatting on base, large head and erect phallus, with details and markings in black
Thebes	Ramesseum	Tomb under gallery no. 5	Faience	Manchester 1837 ³³⁰¹	Small amulet or figurine. 1.8cm.
S. UE	Edfu	Tomb 33	Faience		Squatting on base, the two anterior legs joined in a sleeve ³³⁰²
Levant	Byblos	Obelisk Temple, deposit	Faience		64 baboons ³³⁰³
Nubia	Faras	Hathor rock sanctuary	Faience	Ashmolean E 1912.948 ³³⁰⁴	Upper part only; spots and details painted black.
Nubia	Mirgissa	Hathor Sanctuary	Faience		Two fragments. ³³⁰⁵

Interestingly, unlike many of the other figurine types, those of crocodiles were predominantly made of mud and came from domestic areas of Lahun. Indeed, one Egyptian blue example (Figure 276) from Lahun came from the same infant burial at feeding cup MMA 44.4.1. This context indicates that Sobek held a domestic role in the Fayum during this time, perhaps relating to his water and vegetative associations. The crocodiles either are depicted with

³²⁹⁷ Engelbach, *Riqqeh and Memphis* VI, pl. 43 (description only); Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 140, under no. 416.A.07.95.

³²⁹⁸ Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, no. 416.A.07.95.

³²⁹⁹ Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, no. 416.A.07.96.

³³⁰⁰ Quibell, *Ramesseum*, pl. 3, no. 14.

³³⁰¹ Quibell, *Ramesseum*, pl. 3, no. 6.

³³⁰² Michalowski et al., *Tell Edfou* 1939, 312, no. 1031, pl. XLIV.40; Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, 140, under no. 416.A.07.95.

³³⁰³ Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos*, II, 746-50, nos. 15162-227.

³³⁰⁴ F. L. Griffith, "Oxford Excavations in Nubia: Nubia from the Old to the New Kingdom," AAA 8 (1921): pl. XIX.18; Karkowski, *Faras* V, 109, no. 8, Appendix 1, no. 8; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 285.

³³⁰⁵ Karlin, "Sanctuaire d'Hathor," 351, nos. 152-3; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 285.

horizontal tail with sometimes a raised head or with the tail curved. While the faience wood, and one mud figurine have painted or incised details, most of the mud ones do not have any preserved details.



Figure 276 - MMA 07.227.19. Image assessed from online museum catalogue 7/15/2017.

Table 30 - MK Crocodile Figurines

Region	Site	Context	Material	Museum No.	Description
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite (?)	Faience		Crocodile (?) ³³⁰⁶
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite	Mud	UC7193 ³³⁰⁷	Roughly shaped, no details
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite	Mud	UC7194 ³³⁰⁸	Roughly shaped, no details
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite	Mud	UC7195 ³³⁰⁹	Roughly shaped, no details
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite	Red mud	UC7196 ³³¹⁰	Back ridges marked as crossing lateral and lengthways incised lines, ridges of tail modelled, mouth open, tail horizontal and curving to right
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite	Mud	UC7197 ³³¹¹	Roughly shaped, no details

³³⁰⁶ Petrie, *Kahun, Gurob, and Hawara*, 31.

³³⁰⁷ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 61, pl. LIII.487; Petrie, *Kahun, Gurob and Hawara*, 30; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 384.

³³⁰⁸ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 61, pl. LIII.489; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 384.

³³⁰⁹ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 61, pl. LIII.490; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 384.

³³¹⁰ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 61, pl. LIII.491; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 384, Fig. 4.144.

³³¹¹ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 61, pl. LIII.492; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 384.

Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite	Mud	UC7198 ³³¹²	Roughly shaped, no details, head and tail curving right
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite	Red mud	UC7199 ³³¹³	Roughly shaped, no details
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite	Mud	UC7200 ³³¹⁴	Roughly shaped, no details, upper half fragment
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite	Red mud	UC7201 ³³¹⁵	Roughly shaped, no details
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite	Mud	UC7236i ³³¹⁶	Hind part
Memphis/Fayum	Lahun	Townsite	Wood	UC16741 ³³¹⁷	Tail horizontal, head forward
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht North	west of Amenemhat I pyramid, 'toilet basket II'	Egyptian blue	MMA 07.227.19 ³³¹⁸	Tail horizontal, tip not preserved, head raised
Memphis/Fayum	Lisht North	Cemetery	Wood	MMA 22.1.673 ³³¹⁹	Tail horizontal, head raised
N. UE	Abydos	Tomb 345 A'07 ³³²⁰	Faience		
Nubia	Askut	West of Main Street, Room 5a	Faience		"a few terracotta crocodile figurines" ³³²¹

6.5.2 Context

About half of faience figurines occurred in tombs, but 94.7% of those from Egyptian contexts. Of the figurines with apotropaic iconography, 30% came from tombs. Significant concentrations of faience figurines from tomb contexts occurred in the Memphis/Fayum region and Northern Upper Egypt. Such burial goods are relatively rare, and there seems to have been

³³¹² Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 61, pl. LIII, 488; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 384.

³³¹³ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 61, pl. LIII.493; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 384.

³³¹⁴ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 61, pl. LIII.494; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 384.

³³¹⁵ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 61, no. 495; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 384.

³³¹⁶ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 61, no. 528.

³³¹⁷ Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, Cat.no. 109; B. T. Trope et al., *Excavating Egypt. Great Discoveries from the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology* (Atlanta: Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University, 2005), 66; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 384.

³³¹⁸ MMA excavations 1906-07. Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 383.

³³¹⁹ MMA excavations 1906-07. Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 383.

³³²⁰ Snape, *Mortuary Assemblages* I, 216; II, pl. 20.

³³²¹ Badawy, "Preliminary report," 51. Not included in Miniaci list.

no fixed set in the small number of intact examples preserved.³³²² Likewise, the archaeological contexts do not reveal a connection between the figurines with a certain age group and/or gender.³³²³ It is notable that a subset of late Middle Kingdom tombs for royalty and high officials, which held goods specifically for the burial referred in scholarship as “Osirification regalia,”³³²⁴ largely did not yield any animal figurines.³³²⁵ Rather than as part of popular culture, the context appears to be middle elite, with their distribution concentrated in Lisht, Abydos (Figure 277), and Thebes, sites closely connected with royal power and production.³³²⁶ The regular proportions of the faience figurines indicate that they were likely products of central workshops.³³²⁷ Excavators have identified such a faience production area in Lisht.³³²⁸



Figure 277 – Lion and baboon figurines from Abydos Tomb 416. Image from Kemp and Merrillees, *Minoan Pottery*, pl.15.

³³²² Szpakowska, “Infancy,” 890.

³³²³ Miniaci, “Unbroken Stories,” 275.

³³²⁴ W. Grajetzki, *Tomb Treasures of the Late Middle Kingdom: The Archaeology of Female Burials* (Philadelphia, 2013), 147-54.

³³²⁵ Grajetzki, *The Middle Kingdom*, 111-3; Miniaci, “Collapse,” 129-130; Miniaci and Quirke, “Reconceiving the Tomb,” 339-83.

³³²⁶ G. Miniaci, “Faience workshops in the Middle kingdom: targeting centers and periphery of a production,” in *Palace Culture and its Echoes in the Provinces in the Middle Kingdom*, eds. A. Jiménez-Serrano and A.J. Morales (Leiden-Boston: Brill, forthcoming); Miniaci, “Unbroken Stories,” 274.

³³²⁷ Miniaci, “Unbroken Stories,” 274-5.

³³²⁸ F. Arnold, “Settlement remains,” 15.

Faience figurines from town contexts, namely Lisht-North, Lahun, and Harageh, make up only 2.5% of the corpus and 1.9% of those with apotropaic imagery. Mud figurines of animals, in contrast, occur more often in domestic sites both in Egypt and in Nubia, where they may have a cultic use.³³²⁹

Significantly, nearly all faience figurines from temple contexts occurred outside of Egypt, especially in the Levant at Byblos and Serabit el-Khadim. Faience figurines from temples made up about half of the corpus and 68.1% of those with apotropaic imagery. As Miniaci had noted, the absence of such figures in Middle Kingdom temples in Egypt stands in strong contrast to their use in Early Dynastic Period temples.³³³⁰ It would appear then that the context of faience figurines switched from temples to tombs in Egypt during the late Middle Kingdom, while their presence in temples outside of Egypt may be connected with greater conservatism of peripheral areas.³³³¹

6.5.3 Function

Animal figurines are particularly difficult to date and interpret.³³³² There are two theories on their use: (1) toys³³³³ or (2) religious/votive items.³³³⁴ Most scholars had associated the figures to deities, such as the crocodile to Sobek and the hippopotamus to Taweret.³³³⁵ It is more likely

³³²⁹ Szpakowska, "Infancy," 890.

³³³⁰ Miniaci, "Unbroken Stories," 267-8. For Early Dynastic faience figurines in temples, see ex. R. Bussmann, "The social setting of the temple of Satet in the third millennium BC," in *The First Cataract of the Nile: One Region - Diverse perspectives*, ed. D. Raue et al. (Berlin-Boston: SDAIK 36, 2013), 21-34, for a summary.

³³³¹ Miniaci, "Unbroken Stories," 269; B. Feuer, *Boundaries, Borders and Frontiers in Archaeology: A Study in Spatial Relationships* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2016), 72-8.

³³³² Teeter, *Baked Clay*, 110.

³³³³ David, *Pyramid Builders*, 162-3 thought children made the objects.

³³³⁴ Most scholars, ex. Quirke, "Figures of clay," 149.

³³³⁵ Szpakowska, *Daily life*, 57-8.

that the figurines were religious since they were found in religious contexts such as tombs.³³³⁶ In military settlements, the figurines were likely used by men for protective purposes.³³³⁷

Since faience figurines appeared often coupled in tombs with other categories of objects whose focus was strictly related to the protection of the child and the mother during pregnancy and childbirth, most scholars had considered the principal role of these figurines to protect the woman and child in childbirth.³³³⁸ Under this theory, the animals in the figurines would have represented the solar entourage aiding the sun god's journey to be reborn, in analogy to the birth of the child.³³³⁹ Likewise, other faience and mud figurines representing animals of the desert world and its marsh margins would have perhaps conformed to the theme of confronting and repelling danger to life.³³⁴⁰

However, faience figurines with known apotropaic imagery only make up 36.8% of the corpus and 39.8% of the animals. Even when including figurines of nude women and dwarves, the relevant iconography only adds up to 49% of faience figurines. Indeed, the Middle Kingdom faience figurine corpus includes a significant number of adult humans, plants, domestic animals, and vague and uncertain animals. For example, dog figurines, which often have collars, did not appear in birth iconography and did not appear to relate to apotropaic functions.³³⁴¹ Likewise, several figurines depicted young animals and boys, which did not occur in apotropaic imagery.³³⁴² Similarly, the cow faience figurines did not resemble those of apotropaia, instead relating to Hathor.³³⁴³ The faience figurines with apotropaic iconography have therefore more in common

³³³⁶ Mota, "Household Religion," 49.

³³³⁷ Quirke, "Figures of clay," 149; Mota, "Household Religion," 49.

³³³⁸ Ex: Miniaci, "Collapse," 121; Szpakowska, "Infancy," 890; Miniaci, "Household Religion," 48.

³³³⁹ Szpakowska, "Infancy," 890.

³³⁴⁰ Mota, "Household Religion," 48.

³³⁴¹ K. Braulińska, "Middle Kingdom Dog Figurines. General Remarks," in *Company of Images*, ed. G. Miniaci et al. (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 35-70.

³³⁴² Miniaci, "Unbroken Stories," 272.

³³⁴³ For Hathor's role as a cow goddess, see above, § 2.3.

with those of other materials with the same motifs than those of the same material. Thus, the Middle Kingdom faience figurines cannot be considered as a singular corpus with all the same specific function, but rather should be considered based on the individual iconography of each figure. So, while the Middle Kingdom faience figurines may have had an overall religious and votive purpose, the precise meaning depends on the figure shown.

The apotropaic iconography discussed above appears to have operated as birth imagery from the late Middle Kingdom to the early New Kingdom (Table 31).³³⁴⁴ With Quirke's new dating of the magic wands and kohl vessels exhibiting the same decoration from the early to mid-18th Dynasty, the transition from Middle Kingdom to largely New Kingdom birth imagery was relatively smooth. This continuity is further supported by the tomb scenes depicting the wands, as well as BM EA 63783, a 19th Dynasty headrest with some of the same figures. In form, the feeding-cups exhibited similar endurance, while the decline of faience in the later Second Intermediate Period limited the continuance of the apotropaic designs and faience animal figurines.

[illegible]

Many of the apotropaic motifs either ceased or diminished their appearance in childbirth iconography past the late Middle Kingdom to early New Kingdom, with only a few continuing as part of the standard New Kingdom imagery. Many of the discontinued motifs, namely the serpopard, double sphinx, turtle, snakes, and jackal-head, had little-to-no specific associations with childbirth itself, so no longer fit a more distinct childbirth iconography. Given the focus of the New Kingdom on themes of beds, women, and floral decoration, the day-and-night theme evoked by solar disks and torches became obsolete. The wrapped cow declined in birth iconography while Hathor became increasingly present in private objects, suggesting that the latter subsumed some of the roles of the former. While vultures and crocodiles had associations with motherhood and fertility respectively, these roles pertained more to the divine realm than to human life, so they did not maintain their presence in the New Kingdom birth/fertility material. The lion deity, whose previous domestic roles became subsumed by Ipet/Taweret, and the solar griffin were less common in New Kingdom objects, though they continued in connection to the protection of sleepers. While the baboon/monkey form of Thoth was less birth-specific, he maintained his lunar association with pregnancy.³³⁴⁵

The more birth/fertility-specific figures, namely Aha/Bes, Ipet/Taweret, Heqet, and Renenutet, continued their roles beyond the apotropaia. Whereas in the New Kingdom the iconography of Ipet/Taweret and Heqet remained consistent and Aha/Bes adapted the dwarf form, the depiction of Renenutet in *Wochenlaube* and Type F figurines shifted to the flat red snake for space-saving reasons, with contemporary and later objects representing her more typical rearing-cobra forms. Felines, both as amulets and figurines, were consistently associated with Hathor, with the New Kingdom mother-cat forms more clearly representing a connection to fertility. The religious basis for the use of apotropaia involved the equation of the newborn child/deceased with

³³⁴⁵ For more, see above in §§ 3.5.2 and 5.2.4.2.

the sun god, with the protective figures representing the god's entourage. As discussed above,³³⁴⁶ this association of the child with the sun god was a continuous theme in the medical/magical texts of both the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom.

Though some apotropaia belonged to the sphere of elites, non-elites appeared to have had access to some of these motifs. While the wands named women as owners, the feeding-cups commonly occurred in the burials of infants. The bulk of apotropaic objects from known contexts occurred in the funerary realm.³³⁴⁷ However, some objects, such as a couple wands, several feeding-cups, one baboon figurine, one feline figurine, four lion figurines, and crocodile figurines, occurred in town contexts. The cat figurines seem particularly associated with the Hathor sanctuary at Serabit el-Khadim. Since the apotropaia functioned both for daily life and the funerary realm, they could also have been used as a medium to establish reciprocal communication between these two different worlds.³³⁴⁸

In contrast to the set iconography of apotropaia, the imagery associated with the birthplace shifted over time. In the Middle Kingdom, the latter involved birth-bricks and related cubic rods decorated with a selection of the apotropaic figures. The New Kingdom saw the development of a more specialized bedroom iconography, featuring birth deities and the bed itself. Notably, this New Kingdom representation appeared more widespread across different classes, in contrast to the apotropaia. As discussed above, the foundation for this bedroom iconography lay in the Middle Kingdom with the bedroom objects depicting apotropaic figures, as well as the association of the wands with the bedroom.

³³⁴⁶ See § 5.2, especially § 5.2.4.

³³⁴⁷ For the largely funerary function of the Temple of Obelisks in Byblos, see above, § 2.1.

³³⁴⁸ Pinch, "Redefining Funerary Objects," 445; Miniaci, "Collapse," 122.

Chapter 7: Place of Birth, Place of Worship

7.1 Introduction

Within scholarship discussing Egyptian birth practices, there is a larger debate on where birth took place and whether certain equipment, such as the “box-beds” at Deir el-Medina and birth arbors depicted on ostraca, were used for that purpose. Adding to the difficulty in making such determinations is the Egyptian reluctance to depict the moment of birth. The birth brick found in Wah-Sut and contemporary steatite rod segments share a similar iconographic range within the set of apotropaic imagery discussed above. Royal birth scenes from the mortuary temples of Hatshepsut and Amenhotep III, along with their Old Kingdom and Middle birth shrine precursors, contain some elements relating to the birth process and the role Egyptians ascribed to certain deities in the process.

7.2 Birth Bricks, Rods and Stools

Despite numerous scenes from mammisi chapels from Late Period Egypt and the birth story from Papyrus Westcar mentioning birth bricks, only one such object has been found, from the Mayor’s House in the Middle Kingdom town of Wah-Sut near Abydos. The painted reliefs on the brick shed additional light on the meaning of certain figures in the apotropaic iconography of the Middle Kingdom. Textual and later visual evidence supports the regular use of birth bricks during childbirth. As we will discuss below, Late Middle Kingdom rods likely are related to the birth brick. The possibility of birth stools has occurred in discussion of certain Wochenlaube ostraca and at least one physical stool.

7.2.1 Abydos Birth Brick

The Abydos birth brick is of unfired mudbrick measuring 17 cm x 35 cm and has five preserved sides with painted decoration. The likely original thickness would have been ca. 13

cm, and the brick can be dated to the late 13th Dynasty, (Ca. 1700-1650 BCE).³³⁴⁹ Most of this imagery has direct parallels to those on the apotropaia.³³⁵⁰ Side A appears to be the bottom,³³⁵¹ while sides C and B are the short sides and D and E the long sides. The orientation of the side scenes appears to radiate out from Side C, with the right figure on the side facing right and the same direction continuing on Side D. After a frontal figure on the left part of Side C, the figures on Side E face left. At side B, the two remaining figures are back-to-back. All this suggests the imagery was supposed to be read on the sides in this order, while the other two sides represented a ‘top’ and ‘bottom’ (Figure 278)³³⁵²

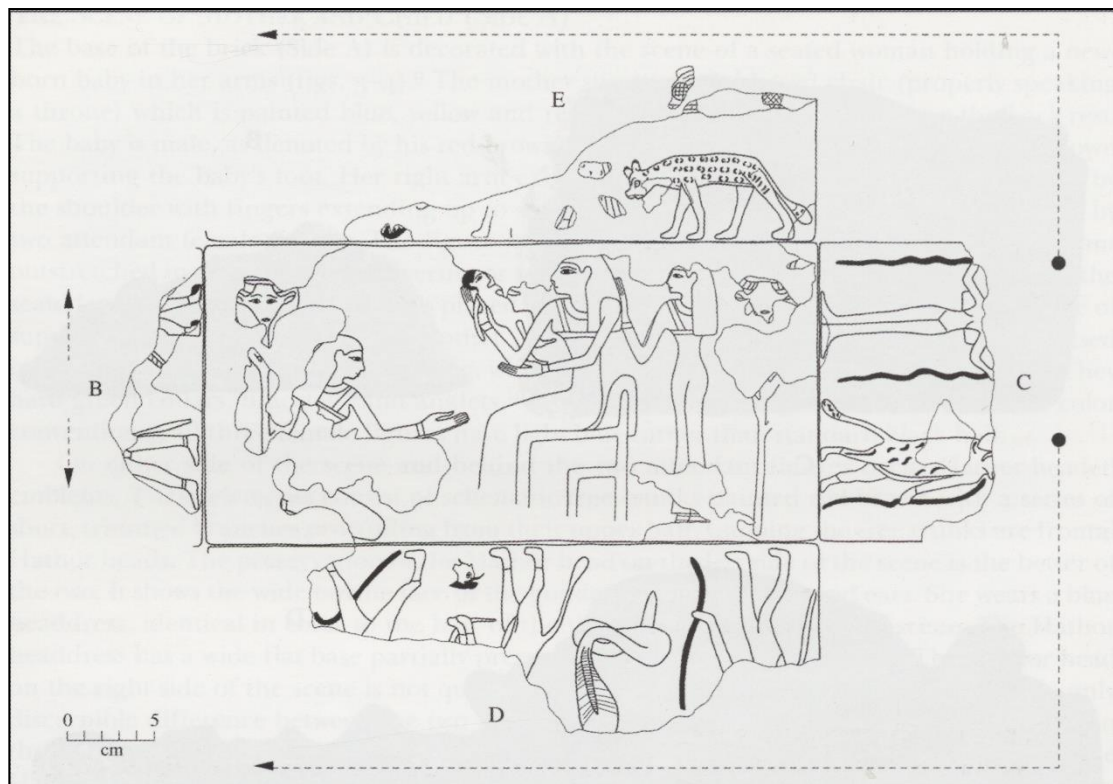


Figure 278 - Orientation of imagery on Abydos birth-brick. Image from Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” fig. 6.

³³⁴⁹ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick from South Abydos,” 448.

³³⁵⁰ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick from South Abydos,” 452.

³³⁵¹ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 449.

³³⁵² Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 452-5.

Side A (Figure 279) is the best preserved of the sides. At the center of the scene, the mother is seated on a throne seat, like those from the New Kingdom royal birth scenes, holding a black-haired red-brown infant, who is likely male.³³⁵³ Two midwives flank the mother, one kneeling in front and the other standing behind in support. The female figures wear green bracelets, collars, and anklets. Either side of the scene has a tree trunk decorated with a Hathor-headed emblem, which, given the evidence surrounding her title “Lady of Sycamore,”³³⁵⁴ likely represented Hathor’s role as a nursing tree goddess.³³⁵⁵ Notably, all the females in the scene, as well as the Hathor emblems, have blue wigs, representing “hair of lapis lazuli.”³³⁵⁶ The Egyptians associated this color with solar rebirth³³⁵⁷ and Hathor in her role as a goddess of fertility and the sky.³³⁵⁸ It is clear that the women in the birth scene are symbolically equated with Hathor, with the use of the throne chair serving as additional evidence.³³⁵⁹ The scene shows the successful childbirth, with the mother already dressed while the kneeling woman indicate the actual delivery, similar to the New Kingdom royal birth scenes.³³⁶⁰ It also appears to be a precursor to the New Kingdom scenes painted on ostraca from Deir el-Medina, which similarly depict a mother and baby after delivery.³³⁶¹ Given the connection of Hathor to Re discussed above,³³⁶² the birth of the child is here likely associated with solar rebirth.³³⁶³

³³⁵³ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 452.

³³⁵⁴ See § 5.2.4.4.

³³⁵⁵ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 459.

³³⁵⁶ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 456.

³³⁵⁷ For example, the blue hair of deities involved in solar regeneration in the Book of the Dead: H. Kees, “Farbensymbolik in ägyptischen religiösen Texten,” *NAWG* 11 (1943): 413-79.

³³⁵⁸ See comments on color symbolism of blue in R. Wilkinson, *Symbol and Magic in Egyptian Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1994), 107-8.

³³⁵⁹ For overview of chairs and thrones see F. Fetten, “Der ägyptischen Stuhl,” in *Stühle: Ein Streifung durch die Kulturgeschichte des Sitzens*, ed. F. Fetten (Gießen: Anabas-Verlag Günter Kämpf KG, 1982), 218-28.

³³⁶⁰ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 455-6.

³³⁶¹ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 455, note 13. See § 7.5 below.

³³⁶² See § 2.3.

³³⁶³ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 463.



Figure 279 – Side A of Abydos birth-brick. Image from Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” fig. 3.

The remaining figures of Side B include an anthropomorphic figure to the left facing left and an upright hippopotamus deity to the right facing right. The former, who is most likely a deity, wears a bull’s tail and kilt. The standing hippopotamus, given her frequent occurrences on contemporary apotropaia, is probably Ipet/Taweret.

Side C consists of two leonine deities. The one to the left, facing frontally and painted blue, is an Ahat figure akin to those on the birth wands and Middle Kingdom figurines, gripping a snake in each hand. On the right, a standing leonine deity, one of the most frequent figures from apotropaia, grasps and likely bites a snake.

Side D consists of five figures probably all facing right. The leftmost is a baboon grasping/biting a snake. To the right is a large rearing cobra,³³⁶⁴ which Wegner posits is likely

³³⁶⁴ As Quirke (*Birth Tusks*, 376) notes, the space is likely too narrow for a human head.

Renenutet.³³⁶⁵ Another standing leonine deity this time grasps a human and, given the human head below, decapitates him. The remains of the fourth figure are unclear, though it too grasps/bites a snake. Though there is space for another figure, the remaining traces of such are destroyed.

On Side E, three figures are preserved. From the left, a wild cat faces left, which parallels depictions of felines in the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom.³³⁶⁶ The cat can both serve as both an incarnation of the sun³³⁶⁷ and, under the name *Miw ʿ3*, as protector against enemies of the sun god.³³⁶⁸ The next figure is a possible recumbent bovine with hatched body like those from the wands.³³⁶⁹ The rightmost preserved figure is a possible quadruped with a tail.

The South Abydos brick can be interpreted as either an actual Meskhenet brick, an item for post-partum magic, or for purely symbolic/amuletic function.³³⁷⁰ The term *msḥnt* meant “that which is in the front of birthing.”³³⁷¹ Depictions of this goddess either illustrated her as a female-headed brick³³⁷² or as a goddess with either a brick or bicornate uterus on her head, and there are rare representations of her in temple relief.³³⁷³ While highly decorated with polychrome painted scenes, the lost upper surface suggested use wear. The lack of blood on the brick may mean it

³³⁶⁵ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 454. For support of this supposition, see above, § 6.2.12.

³³⁶⁶ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 464; see § 6.2.4.

³³⁶⁷ Altenmüller, *Apotropaia*, 171-75.

³³⁶⁸ Faulkner, *Coffin Texts* I, Spell 335 (text in deBuck, *Coffin Texts* IV, lines 283-91); Ibid., *The Ancient Book of the Dead* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972), 44-50; E. Otto, “Die Ätiologie es “grossen Katers” in Heliopolis,” *ZÄS* 81 (1956): 65-6.

³³⁶⁹ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 396.

³³⁷⁰ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 471.

³³⁷¹ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 471, note 70.

³³⁷² Late Book of the Dead in Turin; Spell 125 BD.

³³⁷³ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 471, note 71; Human in PT § 1183b and 1185b in Pepy I, birth scenes at Deir el-Bahari, and subsequent versions of the same scene. Falcon occurred in PT § 1183b and 1185b in Merenre and Pepy II.

was one of the bottom bricks in a group of two,³³⁷⁴ had cloth or padding topping the upper surface,³³⁷⁵ or had a drainage hole dug between the bricks.³³⁷⁶

7.2.2 Additional Evidence for Use of Birth Bricks

Although only one birth brick has been found, there is additional evidence suggesting the usage of birth bricks. While a number of scholars assumed Egyptians used a pair of birth bricks,³³⁷⁷ there is significant evidence for the usage of four bricks.³³⁷⁸ These references, dating from the Old Kingdom through the New Kingdom, ranged from a birth song, a literary text, medical-magical papyri, funerary texts, and Graeco-Roman temple dedications called “mammisi.” The funerary texts corresponded to excavated funerary bricks.³³⁷⁹ Despite these differences in time and genre, each of the texts clearly discussed bricks used during childbirth. The sources range from texts, artistic depictions, and objects. While Egyptian sources did not discuss the preparation of birth bricks, first millennium BCE textual references from Mesopotamia gave around a week for creating and blessing the birth brick.³³⁸⁰

The earliest recorded use of the bricks of *mshnt* is a relief from the tomb chapel of Waatetkhethor, dating to the 6th Dynasty.³³⁸¹ The third register of what appears to be a birth song recited by female dancers read: *j (i)fdw sjj stz3.t* ‘O four, what are you lifting up.’³³⁸² Tellingly,

³³⁷⁴ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 476.

³³⁷⁵ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 476, fig. 14.

³³⁷⁶ Wegner, “a decorated birth-brick,” 476-7, fig. 14. For the latter, he cited a modern Egyptian ethnographic parallel (H. Winkler, *Ägyptische Völkskunde* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1936).)

³³⁷⁷ Feucht, “Das Weg in der Leben,” 46; Ghalioungui, *House of Life*, 115-6.

³³⁷⁸ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick from South Abydos,” 472.

³³⁷⁹ Ex: Silverman, “Magical bricks of Hunuro,” 725-741.

³³⁸⁰ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 472, citing Atarkhasis 64, 294 and 65, 291ff. For additional sources, see *CAD L (libittu)*, 1.2.

³³⁸¹ Kanawati and Abner-Razig, *Waatetkhethor*, p. 26, pl. 60 (a).

³³⁸² Kanawati and Abner-Razig, *Waatetkhethor*, 26; Roth and Roehrig, “Magical bricks and the bricks of birth,” 131; Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 473.

four bricks determine the phrase *ỉ (i)fd*, which may signify the birth bricks.³³⁸³ The birth context in this tomb is further demonstrated in the use of the Old Kingdom title *ỉnỉ.t*, “midwife”.³³⁸⁴

The tale of the birth of three princes from Papyrus Westcar, as we discussed above, described the post-partum use of an *ỉfd m dbt*.³³⁸⁵ Scholars had two different interpretations of this phrase: a “cushion of bricks,”³³⁸⁶ or a “pillow of cloth.”³³⁸⁷ Staehelin had argued that the phrase couldn’t have meant birth bricks, since the other babies were born after the first is placed on them.³³⁸⁸ However, as Roth and Roehrig noted, children could be moved off the bricks when another was coming.³³⁸⁹ Similarly, Staehelin had also stated that one brick (23 cm x 11.5 cm x 7.5 cm) would not have been large enough for a newborn.³³⁹⁰ Yet, as Wegner noted,³³⁹¹ a newborn could fit if the legs were raised to the stomach in a flexed position. The meaning of Meskhenet’s name “place of alighting,” may indeed have reflected this placement of the child.³³⁹²

Some of the medical-magical spells dating to at least the New Kingdom mentioned birth bricks as part of the prescription or incantation. In Berlin 3027 Spell F,³³⁹³ the priest invoked Meskhenet to protect the child, with the spell recited upon bricks. As discussed above, Leiden Spell 33 invited Hathor to the woman’s “pavilion.” As Wegner noted,³³⁹⁴ ancient Egyptians had long associated pavilions with the horizon, so the use of the term here likely invoked solar symbolism. Indeed, the flanking trunks of the Abydos brick may be an early example of this

³³⁸³ Roth and Roehrig, “Magical bricks and the bricks of birth,” 131.

³³⁸⁴ Roth and Roehrig, “Magical bricks and the bricks of birth,” 131. For more on this title, see §2.2.3, pages 43-45 and Figure 1.

³³⁸⁵ P. Westcar 10, 12.

³³⁸⁶ G. Jèquier, “Materiaux pour server,” *BIFAO* 19 (1922): 39; Roth and Roehrig, “Magical bricks,” 131; Simpson, *Literature in ancient Egypt*, 28.

³³⁸⁷ Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* I, 220; Staehelin, “Bindung und Entbindung,” 125-39.

³³⁸⁸ Staehelin, “Bindung und Entbindung,” 129-130.

³³⁸⁹ Roth and Roehrig, “Magical bricks and the bricks of birth,” 132.

³³⁹⁰ Staehelin, “Bindung und Entbindung,” 130.


³³⁹¹ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 478, n.95.

³³⁹² Roth and Roehrig, “Magical bricks and the bricks of birth,” 132.

³³⁹³ See above in § 5.2.4.3.

³³⁹⁴ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 475.

pavilion.³³⁹⁵ Later in the Ptolemaic Temple of Hathor at Dendera, a votive plaque depicted a

woman assisted by two cow-headed Hathors in a gateway ().³³⁹⁶ Ebers Spell 789 likewise specified pouring its prescription on a brick for the woman to sit on.³³⁹⁷

While the birth brick dates to the Middle Kingdom, New Kingdom sources mentioned the suffering of a woman giving birth in a squatting position, with her “sitting on the bricks.”³³⁹⁸ Likewise, a male weaver described his suffering like that of a woman giving birth, “with knees against his chest.”³³⁹⁹ These sources, however, do not provide any additional information on the bricks, nor how many Egyptians used.

A couple of spells from the Book of the Dead concerned bricks. In some vignettes of BD 125, Meskhenet, Shai, and Renenutet appeared as human-headed bricks,³⁴⁰⁰ which likely symbolized birth bricks.³⁴⁰¹ Interestingly, there are several examples which replaced Renenutet with Reret,³⁴⁰² further supporting a connection between rebirth and childbirth. The most significant BD spell discussing bricks is BD 151 (Figure 280),³⁴⁰³ which offered protection of the tomb via placement of four bricks with corresponding amulets at the cardinal points in the burial chamber.³⁴⁰⁴ Egyptians seemed to have associated bricks with Osiris.³⁴⁰⁵ Berlin 3027 Spell G,

³³⁹⁵ For more on possible depictions of birth pavilions, see below, § 7.4.1, 558.

³³⁹⁶ Cairo JE 40627. For image, see for ex. Wegner, “A decorated birth brick,” Fig. 12.

³³⁹⁷ 93, 18-19. For translation, see *Grundriß* V, 486. See also discussion above in § 5.2.5.2.

³³⁹⁸ Turin Stele 50058: Mario Tosi and Alessandro Roccati, *Stele e altre epigrafi di Deir el-Medina* (Turin: Edizioni d'Arte Fratelli Pozzo, 1972), 94-86 and pl. on 286; Toivari-Viitala, *Woman at Deir el-Medina*, 174.

³³⁹⁹ W. Helck, *Die Lehre des dw3-ḥtjj* (Wiesbaden, 1970); Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* I, 188; Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 174.

³⁴⁰⁰ C. Seeber, *Untersuchungen zur Darstellung* (MÄS 35; München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1976), 83-8; J. Quaebeur, *La dieu égyptien Shai* (Louvain: Presses Universitaires de Louvain, 1975), 147-58.


³⁴⁰¹ Roth and Roehrig, “Magical bricks and the bricks of birth,” 136.

³⁴⁰² Quaebeur, *La dieu égyptien Shai*, 152-4.

³⁴⁰³ Translation in Faulkner, *Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*, Spell 151.

³⁴⁰⁴ E. Koleva-Ivanov, “Osiris et les briques sacrées,” *BIFAO* 112 (2012): 221; Silverman, “Magical Bricks of Hunuro,” 729. For vignette depictions, see for ex: Roth and Roehrig, “Magical bricks,” fig. 2; C. Seeber, *Untersuchungen*, 105.

³⁴⁰⁵ Koleva-Ivanov, “Osiris et les briques sacrées,” 222, notes 38-39.

recited to prevent Meskhenet from assigning a poor fate for the newborn, invoked Osiris as protection.³⁴⁰⁶ Indeed, by the 19th Dynasty, Osiris-*ḥndj*, a form of Osiris of the Delta region, began to wear the Meskhenet-sign , iconography that lasted until the Ptolemaic period.³⁴⁰⁷ Interestingly, as Roth and Roehrig noted, the actual placement of bricks in the Valley of the Kings did not correspond to that specified by the text, with them occurring in clusters in the tombs of Amenhotep II, Amenhotep III, and perhaps Thutmose IV.³⁴⁰⁸ They had attributed this divergence with symbolic linkage to birth bricks, given the pairing of the latter.³⁴⁰⁹

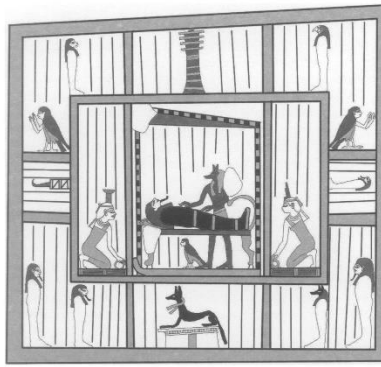


Figure 280 – Diagram of BD 151 vignette from tomb of Sennefer (TT96). Roth and Roehrig, “Magical bricks,” fig. 2.

Bricks likewise appeared to have had a protective function in temple contexts from at least the Ptolemaic period.³⁴¹⁰ In the hymn to Khnum written on the Greco-Roman temple at Esna, various forms of Khnum “have placed their four Meskhenet at their sides, to repel the designs of evil by incantations.”³⁴¹¹ In Dendera, a relief depicts a woman sitting inside a brick

³⁴⁰⁶ Koleva-Ivanov, “Osiris et les briques sacrées,” 221-2; see also above in § 5.2.4.3.

³⁴⁰⁷ Ivanov-Kolev, “Osiris et les briques sacrées,” 222, n.36, citing R. David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1981), 131 and Chr. Favard-Meeks, *Le temple de Behbeit el-Hagara: essai de reconstitution et d'interprétation* (Hambourg: H. Buske, 1991), 453-458.

³⁴⁰⁸ Roth and Roehrig, “Magical bricks,” 124-126, Table 1.

³⁴⁰⁹ Roth and Roehrig, “Magical bricks and the bricks of birth,” 133.

³⁴¹⁰ S. El-Adly, *Das Gründungs und Weiheritual* (Tübingen: Zeeb-Druck, 1981); Roth and Roehrig, “Magical bricks,” 132, 135; Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 474.

³⁴¹¹ Translation from Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian literature* III, 250, 19.

structure with her hands on her knees giving birth.³⁴¹² Notably, this structure was shaped like a naos/pylon, evoking the horizon.³⁴¹³

7.2.3 Rod Segments

Rod segments, consisting of joined rectangular pieces with carved decoration on the sides and originally small figurines pegged in on top, may be related to birth bricks. Dating to the late Middle Kingdom, these objects primarily come in steatite or faience, though there are examples in bone³⁴¹⁴ and wood.³⁴¹⁵ The objects are perforated lengthwise and would have been joined by dowel or metal pin.³⁴¹⁶ There are relatively few of these objects found so far, with some excavated examples, both rods and animal figures, from tombs in Lisht North³⁴¹⁷ and Thebes,³⁴¹⁸ two rods and five topping figures from the pro-cella temple deposits at Byblos,³⁴¹⁹ and three from the town of Lahun.³⁴²⁰ The sole complete example is MMA 26.7.1275,³⁴²¹ with the four combined segments extending to 28 cm long. Much too delicate to be dragged on the ground like the birth wands and so without the use wear, these rod segments, while sharing some of the same apotropaic imagery, served a different function. The fact that all known pieces are made of

³⁴¹² CG 40627: Wegner, "A decorated birth-brick," fig. 12; E. Strouhal, "Maternity of Ancient Egypt," in *Anthropology of Maternity: Proceedings of the Conference held in Prague, November 26-29, 1975*, ed. A. Dolezal and J. Gutvirth (Prague: Universitas Carolina Pragensis, 1977), 288 and fig. 1.

³⁴¹³ Wegner, "A decorated birth-brick," 480.

³⁴¹⁴ Ex: MMA 15.3.929.

³⁴¹⁵ Ex: UC16685, UC16647.

³⁴¹⁶ Wegner, "A decorated birth-brick," 473.

³⁴¹⁷ MMA 15.3.929.

³⁴¹⁸ Ramesseum: Quibell, *Ramessesum*, 3, pl. III, now Manchester 1795. C37, pit 37/25: Miniaci, "Collapse," 122-123.

³⁴¹⁹ Segments: Dunand, *Fouilles II*, pls. 95 (no. 15462-3), 98.1 (15379-83); Fischer, *Turtles*, 32, no. 93; Dunand, *Fouilles II*, pl. 98.1.

³⁴²⁰ UC16685: Petrie, *Kahun*, 29, pl. VIII.11; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 342, Fig. 4.41. UC16647: Petrie, *Illahun*, pl. VIII.1; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 341, Fig. 4.38. UC16741: Petrie, *Illahun*, pl. VIII.2; D. C. Patch, "Crocodile Figurine," in *Ancient Egypt Transformed*, 216 (Cat. 155).

³⁴²¹ Fischer, *Turtles*, 32-33, no. 92; Hayes, *Scepter I*, 227-8.

valuable material and are of a high-quality craftsmanship, may suggest that they were used only in elite circles.³⁴²²

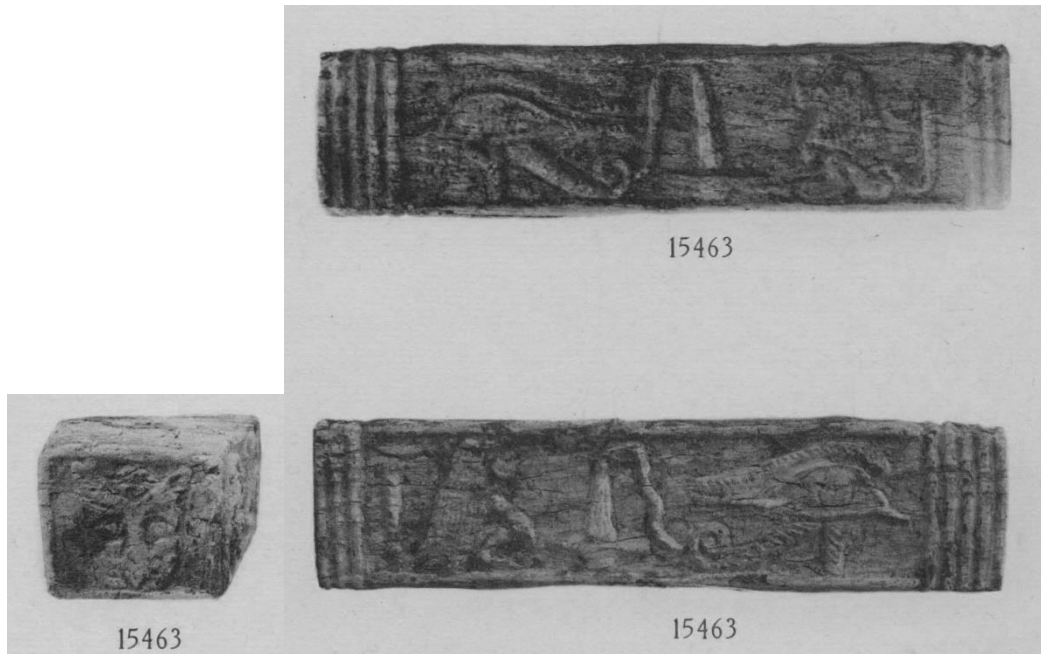


Figure 281 – Short end and long sides of a rod segment. Image from Dunand, *Fouilles des Byblos II*, pl. XCV, no. 15463.

The iconography of the rod segments is a more limited selection of apotropaic imagery, without the standing lions, long-necked felines, frontal figures, and Ipet-images typical of the wands.³⁴²³ This assortment appears to have been partly due to the vertical limits of the medium itself, with other less vertical versions of the lion more common. Crocodiles appear as raised relief figures on long sides of cuboid rods³⁴²⁴ and as figures topping such rods.³⁴²⁵ Similarly, the recumbent lion occurs as an incised image³⁴²⁶ and as a topping-figure.³⁴²⁷ Two segments shows a

³⁴²² Quirke, *Lahun*, 100, Gnirs, “Nipferdstosszähne, 138.

³⁴²³ Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, 341-3, 343, 352, 366, 371, 384-5, 391, 413-4; Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 115-6; Pinch, *Magic*, 78-79; Friedman, *Gifts of the Nile*, 207 no. 68.

³⁴²⁴ MMA 15.3.929; MMA 26.7.1275 = Fischer, *Turtles*, 32-33, no. 92; Fitzwilliam E426.1982; Bourriau, *Pharaohs and Mortals*, 115, Cat. 104a; UC58831; Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 39, pl. XXXV.3.

³⁴²⁵ Dunand, *Fouilles II*, pl. 98.1; MMA 26.7.1275; UC16741; Tomb C37, pit tomb 37/25.

³⁴²⁶ Manchester 1795; Fitzwilliam E.426.1982; UC16685; UC58831.

³⁴²⁷ MMA 26.7.1275; Dunand, *Fouilles II*, pl. 98.1 (15382-3); UC166477.

variant, with the lion striding on the side of the wand instead of recumbent.³⁴²⁸ Felines are another common figure, occurring on the sides of rod segments.³⁴²⁹ An unusual rod segment represents a *sz*-hieroglyph to the right of a feline.³⁴³⁰ Turtles³⁴³¹ can occur on the sides and tops of rod segments, whereas frogs³⁴³² only appear as figures on top of rod segments. Only appearing as raised reliefs on long sides of rod segments is the figure group of baboon and *wḏt*-eye, either with a torch³⁴³³ or without it.³⁴³⁴

In addition to space considerations, the choice of motifs also reflected some of the most common/important figures from the wands.³⁴³⁵ The lions likely referred to the otherwise standing domestic lion goddess, who in turn commonly co-occurred with Ipet/Taweret, which may have made the figures able to represent aspects of both deities. Other felines held associations with Hathor, whereas the frogs represented Heqet. The Return of the Solar Eye occurs with the motif of baboon-with-*wḏt*-eye. While the crocodile was a solar figure with fertility aspects, the turtle was a solar foe with perhaps association with breast milk.

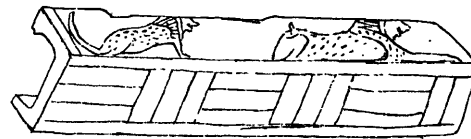


Figure 282 (left) – Rod from Lahun. Image from Petrie, *KGH*, pl. 8, no. 11.
Figure 283 (right) – Manchester 1795. Image from Quibell, *Ramesseum*, pl. 3, no. 18.

³⁴²⁸ Dunand, *Fouilles*, II, pl. 95 (15462); Wallis, *Egyptian Ceramic Art*, 15, figs. 22-23.

³⁴²⁹ Manchester 1795; Dunand, *Fouilles*, II, pl. 95 (15462); MMA 26.7.1275; Louvre E9940l: M. Etienne, *Heka: magie et envoûtement dans l'Égypte ancienne* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 2000), 71, 111, cat. No. 215a; Formerly MacGregor collection: H. Wallis, *Egyptian Ceramic Art: the MacGregor collection. A Contribution towards the History of Egyptian Pottery* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1898), 15, figs. 22; Quirke, *Birth Tusks*, fig. 4.163.

³⁴³⁰ Louvre E9940l: Etienne, *Heka*, 71, 111, cat. No. 215a.

³⁴³¹ Dunand, *Fouilles*, II, pl. 98.1 (15379); Fischer, *Turtles*, pl. 19; MMA 26.7.1275.

³⁴³² Dunand, *Fouilles*, II, pl. 98.1 (15380); MMA 26.7.1275.

³⁴³³ MMA 26.7.1275

³⁴³⁴ Wallis, *Egyptian Ceramic Art*, 15, fig. 22.

³⁴³⁵ For the individual motifs, see in § 6.2.



Figure 284 (left) – Rod possibly from vaulted tomb in Heliopolis. Carnarvon Collection. Image from Fischer, *Turtles*, pl. 19.

Figure 285 (right) – Figurines for top of rod. Image from Dunand, *Fouilles des Byblos II*, pl. XCVIII, nos. 15779-15783.

The use of four segments for the only complete rod segment, MMA 26.7.1275 (Figure 286), has led Ritner and Wegner to connect these objects to birth-bricks, which, we have discussed above,³⁴³⁶ may also have been a set of four.³⁴³⁷ Likewise, the imagery and occurrences at the Ramesseum tomb and a town context connects these rods to the protection of mother and child.³⁴³⁸ Given the delicacy of the objects, they were likely held upright and horizontally.³⁴³⁹

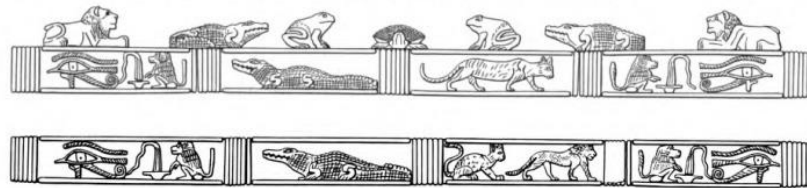


Figure 286 – MMA 26.7.1275. Image from Hayes, *Scepter I*, fig. 143.

7.2.4 Birth Stool?

Some scholars have suggested that, in addition to birth bricks, Egyptians used stools (Figure 287) for the delivery.³⁴⁴⁰ Suggested birth stools occur in both physical remains and depictions, and there is some ethnographic evidence for the use of such stools. As will be explained below, this evidence is rather small.

³⁴³⁶ See above, § 7.2.2.

³⁴³⁷ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 473-4, n. 85.

³⁴³⁸ Wegner, “A decorated birth-brick,” 474; Gnirs, “Nipferdstosszähne, 138.

³⁴³⁹ Quirke, *Lahun*, 100; Gnirs, “Nipferdstosszähne, 138.

³⁴⁴⁰ Ex: Strouhal, *Life of the Ancient Egyptians*, 17; Watterson, *Women in ancient Egypt*, 89-90; Feucht, “Das Weg in der Leben,” 47-8 and n.86.

Pillet has compared a 19th-20th Dynasty wooden stool found in the Theban tomb of Khenmose (TT253) (Figure 288) to modern birth stools found in the Ethnographic and Gayer Anderson Museums in Cairo.³⁴⁴¹ While some have argued that it was a toilet seat, Hansen contended that it could have served both purposes.³⁴⁴² There is likewise ethnographic evidence for the use of such stools in certain Middle Eastern areas in the mid-20th Century.³⁴⁴³ However, there is currently no way to confirm whether the seat would have served as a birth chair.

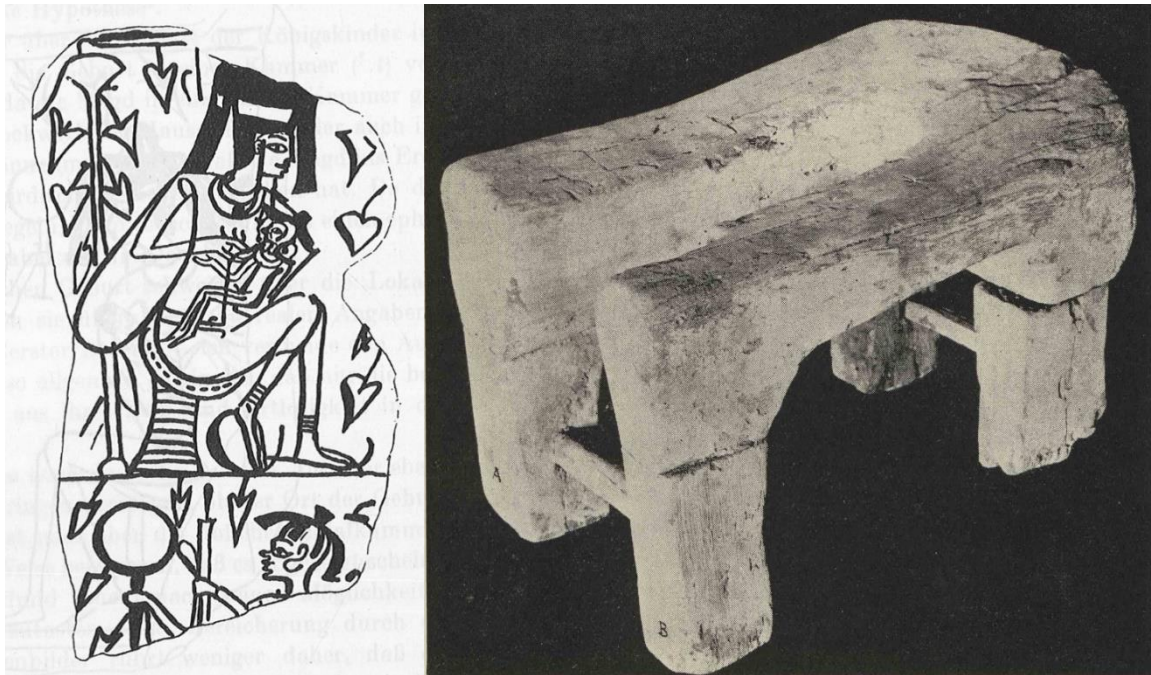


Figure 287 (left) - BM 8506, from Deir el-Medina. Image from Brunner-Traut, "Die Wochenlaube," Abb. 4.
Figure 288 (right) – Cairo JE 56353 from Qurna. Image from Pillet, "Les scènes de naissance," fig. 8.

One of the earliest representations of a possible birth stool is in the birth house of Amenhotep III's temple in Luxor.³⁴⁴⁴ Another depiction of such a stool occurs in Memphis,

³⁴⁴¹ Pillet, "Les scènes de naissance," 91-3.

³⁴⁴² A.E. Hanson, "A Division of Labor: Roles for Men in Greek and Roman Births," *Thamyris* 1 (1994): 166.

³⁴⁴³ P. Cassar, "Vestiges of the parturition chair in Malta," *St. Luke's Hosp. Gaz.* (Malta) 8/1 (1973): 58-60; H. Geiger, "Vorschlag zu einem kombinierten Gebäh-Stuhl-Bett," *Ztbl. Gynaek.* 8.5 (1964): 174-176; Watterson, *Women in ancient Egypt*, 90, note 39.

³⁴⁴⁴ P.B. Adamson, "Some rituals associated with parturition in antiquity," *Folklore* 96:2 (1985): 176, note 6; Thompson in *Proc. Roy. Soc. Med. (Hist. Med.)* 15 (6) (1922), 13-20, see 13-14.

where a relief fragment depicts a woman sitting upon such a chair, her feet resting on a cushion while a second female stands in front and likely offers something (Figure 289).³⁴⁴⁵ This stool takes the form of a jar-stand-like base, decorated horizontally by a series of concentric bands, with the seat and back consisting of a single unit, closely resembling a modern contour chair.³⁴⁴⁶ The stool most commonly occurs on the “birth arbor” ostraca scenes from Deir el-Medina, which depict a woman seated upon such a chair, nursing an infant on her lap and attended by one or more female attendants.³⁴⁴⁷

However, this stool appears in other contexts not related to birth. For example, in one ostrakon (Figure 290), a man sits on this chair in front of an oven.³⁴⁴⁸ In addition, a relief from the tomb of Menna at Thebes (TT 69) depicts a girl, possibly sitting on this stool, having a thorn removed from her foot.³⁴⁴⁹ Therefore, the stool depicted in these representations does not appear to have been a “birth stool.”

³⁴⁴⁵ Alan R. Schulman, “A birth scene (?) from Memphis,” *JARCE* 22 (1985): 97.

³⁴⁴⁶ Schulman, “A birth scene (?) from Memphis,” 99.

³⁴⁴⁷ Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, no. 2379; *Ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, nos. 2853 and 2858; BM 8506: Brunner-Traut, “Die Wochenlaube,” 14, fig. 4.

³⁴⁴⁸ Brunner-Traut, “Die Wochenlaube,” 28, n.85; A. Minault-Gout, “Deux ‘oubliés’ du Caire: ostraca figures JE 49111 et JE 63807,” in *Egyptian Museum Collections around the World: Studies for the Centennial of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo* II, ed. M. Eldamaty and M. Trad (Cairo: Supreme Council of Antiquities, 2002), 827-8, pl. 1b.

³⁴⁴⁹ Published by J.D. Cooney, “Three Early Saïte Tomb Reliefs,” *JNES* 9 (1950), pl. 15, together with the Saïte copy relief, Brooklyn 47.78, *ibid.* pl. 14; Schulman, “A birth scene (?) from Memphis,” figs. 8a-b.

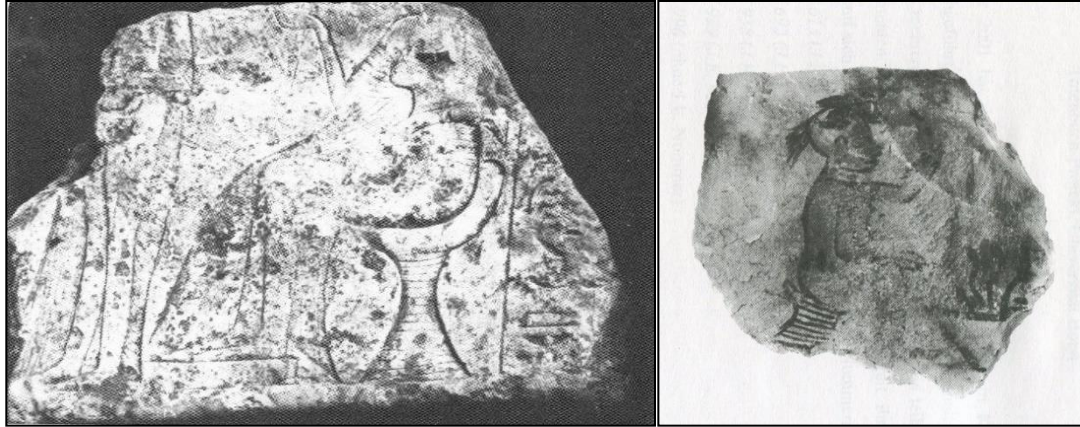


Figure 289 (left) – Memphis Find No. M-2795. Image from Schulman, “A birth scene (?) from Memphis,” fig. 1a.
Figure 290 (right) – Cairo JE 63807. Image from Minault-Gout, “Deux ‘oubliés’ du Caire,” pl. 1b.

7.2.5 Conclusions

The imagery on the late Middle Kingdom birth brick and rod segments derived from the apotropaic iconography characteristic of the late Middle Kingdom to early New Kingdom. The brick iconography tended to select from more birth and fertility-related deities, namely Hathor, Aha, Ipet, Heqet, the lion, Renenutet, the crocodile, and Hesat.³⁴⁵⁰ The Abydos birth brick, in addition to Berlin 3027,³⁴⁵¹ indicates that Hathor had a birth role during the Middle Kingdom. Other figures on the rods and birth brick provided a summary of the mythology surrounding the sun god. While the feline likely represented either Mafdet or Re, the baboon with solar eye reflected the return of the solar eye and the turtle was a foe that had association with breastmilk.³⁴⁵²

Although the brick and rods dated to the late Middle Kingdom, the written evidence discussed above indicated a continued use of birth-bricks well beyond that period. In contrast, the stool depicted in New Kingdom reliefs and ostraca, as well as one physical example, does not

³⁴⁵⁰ See relevant sections above in § 6.2.

³⁴⁵¹ See above, §§ 5.2.4.3-4.

³⁴⁵² See respectively §§ 6.2.4, 6.2.8, 6.2.10, and 6.4.2.

appear associated with childbirth. The lack of other preserved birth bricks currently makes it impossible to determine whether the iconography of birth bricks shifted over time to reflect that of other birth and fertility material. However, certain elements, namely the throne chair, Hathor, and the image of the successful birth, continued in New Kingdom royal birth scenes.

7.3 Birth Scenes

As an event, depictions of childbirth were quite rare in ancient Egypt.³⁴⁵³ The series of relief scenes from the mortuary temples of Hatshepsut and Amenhotep III are notable for their depiction of the whole process of conception to post-birth aftercare. While elements, such as the king being a child of Amun, are obviously imagery associated with the religious symbolism of royal divinity, the scenes provide information on the use of midwives and special beds, as well as some of the customs associated with childbirth. They appear to have built upon earlier concepts of royal birth, like the Westcar Papyrus story of the three princes. Interestingly, the birth shrine described to be located at the mortuary temple of Amenemhat II³⁴⁵⁴ appears to be an early concept for the later temporary structures seen in New Kingdom ostraca and the post-New Kingdom mammisi structures inside temples.

7.3.1 Birth Shrine/Bed Canopy

In the beginning of his sole rule, Amenemhat II commissioned in his mortuary complex a birth shrine, an event recorded in his annals:³⁴⁵⁵

³⁴⁵³ Strouhal (*Life of the Ancient Egyptians*, 16) considered a scene from the tomb of Ankhmahor as representing childbirth (N. Kanawati and A. Hassan, *The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara, Volume II: The tomb of Ankhmahor*, Australian Centre for Egyptology Reports 9 (Warminster: Aris and Phillips Ltd., 1996) 50, pl. 55(a); A. Badawy, *The tomb of Nyhetep-Ptah at Giza and the Tomb of 'Ankhm'ahor at Saqqara* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1978), 19, pl. 31). However, the scene clearly showed a man getting his foot treated.

³⁴⁵⁴ See below.

³⁴⁵⁵ H. Altenmüller and Ahmed M. Moussa, "Die Inschrift Amenemhets II. Aus dem Ptahtempel von Memphis. Ein Vorbericht," *SAK* 18 (1991): 11 Nr. 19; J. Málek and S. Quirke, "Memphis, 1991: Epigraphy," *JEA* 78 (1992): p. 13ff; H. Altenmüller, "Geburtsschrein und Geburtshaus," 27, Abb. 1.

Installation (sḥ) (of) acacia wood:	
Shrine of birth (sšdt nt mst)	1
ḥꜣw ḥtm	15
bꜣḥyt	6
in the (Pyramid Temple of Amenemhat II)	
‘Supplied is Amenemhat II’ (dfꜣ-ʾmn-m-ḥt).”	

While the wooden structure is no longer physically preserved, certain features are notable. Its location at a mortuary temple and use of wood appear similar to the so-called bed canopies depicted in tomb chapel reliefs of Old Kingdom elites. While the latter does not appear connected to birth, some of their physical features may have inspired later, more birth-related, bed iconography. Likewise, the determinative used in the annals for the building appears as a four-sided building with six columns or pillars, and it reminiscent of these same Old Kingdom bed arbors (Figure 291).³⁴⁵⁶

³⁴⁵⁶ These scenes are documented at the following tombs:

- a) Giza: D. Dunham and W.K. Simpson, *The Mastaba of Queen Merysankh III*, Giza Mastabas I (Boston, 1974), 16, pl. 9d, fig. 8; S. Hassan, *Giza IV*, 140, fig. 81; Junker, *Giza IV*, p.40, fig.10a.
- b) Saqqara: B. de Rachewiltz, *The Rock tomb of Irw-kꜣ-Pth* (Leiden: Brill, 1960), pl. 12 a-b; S. Hassan, *Mastabas of Ny-aankh-Pepy and others, Excav. At Saqqara (1937-1938)*, v. II (Cairo, 1975), p. 97-98, fig. 39-41; P. Duell, *Mereruka II* (OIP 39; Chicago, 1938), pl. 91-95; A. Moussa and F. Junge, *Two tombs of craftsmen* (AV 9; Mainz, 1975), pl. 1-2; P. Munro, *Der Unasfriedhof Nord-West I* (Mainz, 1993), pl. 22; H. Altenmüller, *Die Wanddarstellungen im Grab des Mehu*, AV 42 (Mainz: P. von Zabern, 1998), pl. 52-53; Brooklyn Mus. 71.10.1 = R. Fazzini, “Some Egyptian reliefs in Brooklyn,” *Miscellanea Wilbouriana I* (1972), p. 41, fig. 7.
- c) Dashur: Borchardt, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches II*, p. 199, pl.106 (CG 1777).
- d) Provinces: N. Kanawati, *Deir el Gebrai II* (Oxford: Aris & Phillips, 2007), pl. 23; Ibid., *The rock tombs of El-Hawawish, The Cemetery of Akhmim I* (Sydney, 1980), fig. 9; M. Saleh, *Three Old Kingdom Tombs at Thebes*, AV 14 (Mainz: von Zabern, 1977), pl. 4, 13.

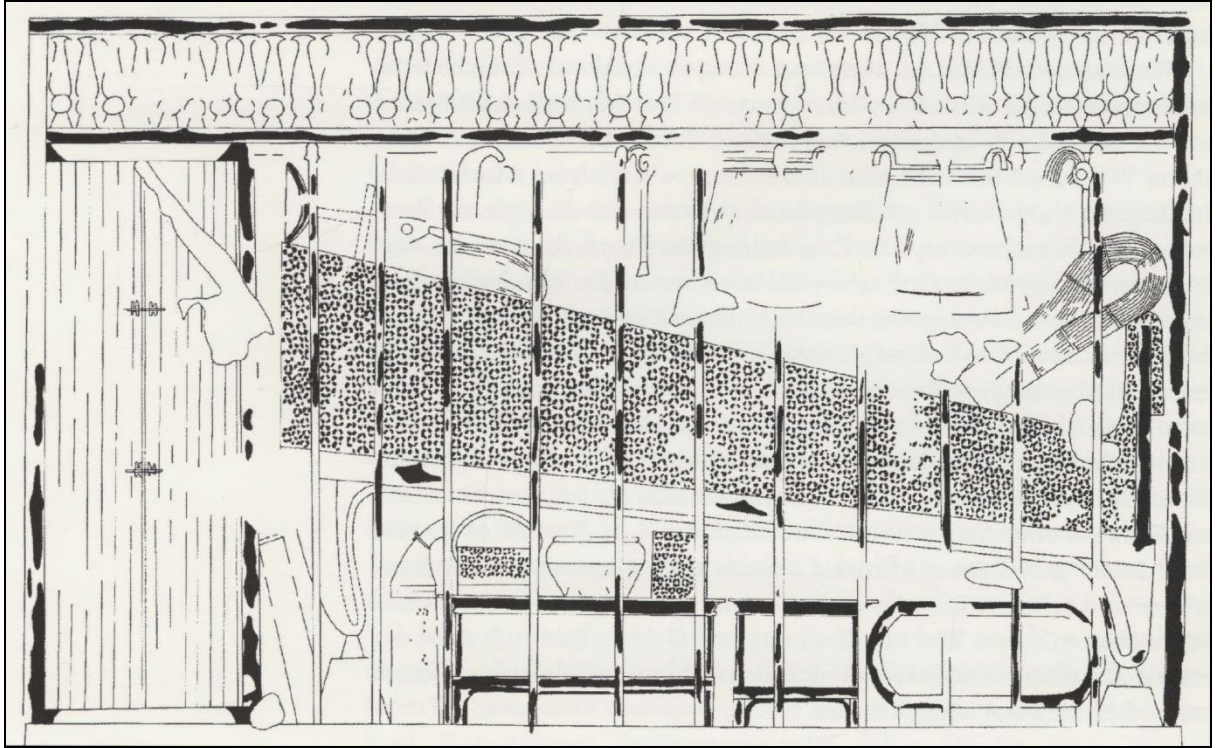


Figure 291 – Example of Old Kingdom birth arbor from Saqqara. Image from Altenmüller, “Geburtsschrein,” Abb. 2.

The Old Kingdom bed arbors for royalty and high officials tend to share physical features. They typically consist of a pillared entrance to a pronaos and main building, a structure essentially the same as the *mammisi* of late Egypt.³⁴⁵⁷ The columns are usually plant forms, with one case of *sistrum*-shaped pillars.³⁴⁵⁸ From the tomb of Queen Hetepheres, a box which contained bed canopy curtains provides a measurement of the mats used in the Old Kingdom structures: 157.5 cm in length, a depth of 21.5 cm, and a height of 18.5 cm.³⁴⁵⁹ The length of the bed canopy of Mereruka, Room A.10, is 11 m long.³⁴⁶⁰ Interestingly, the scenes from this room depicted the gathering of the tomb owner with his wife, with the aim of procreation and birth.³⁴⁶¹

³⁴⁵⁷ Altenmüller, “Geburtsschrein und Geburtshaus,” 30; L. Borchardt, *Ägyptische Tempel mit Umgang*, Beiträge Bf 2 (Cairo: Herausgebers, 1938); F. Daumas, *Les mammisis des temples égyptiens*, (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1958).

³⁴⁵⁸ Altenmüller, “Geburtsschrein und Geburtshaus,” 30-1; Borchardt, *Ägyptische Tempel mit Umgang*, p. 3-5, folio 1.

³⁴⁵⁹ Reisner, *Giza II*, p. 26, pl.12.

³⁴⁶⁰ Mass after Duell, *Mereruka*, pl. 1, see also Duell, *Mereruka*, 9.

³⁴⁶¹ Altenmüller, “Geburtsschrein und Geburtshaus,” 30.

Given the similarities of the birth shrine (*sšdt nt mst*) of Amenemhat II with the Old Kingdom bed canopy, it is probable that the *bšhyt* and *hšw-ḥtm*, both words determined with a rectangular narrow object, are types of mats.³⁴⁶² The former could designate something that is “in the front” (*m-bšḥ*),³⁴⁶³ meaning in the “vestibule,” and the latter could refer to something that is “behind” (*hš*),³⁴⁶⁴ meaning in the “main room.” Using the measurements of mats from the tomb of Hetepheres, Altenmüller had determined the two rooms of the Amenemhat II birth shrine would be about the same size as that of Mereruka (Figure 292).³⁴⁶⁵

³⁴⁶² Altenmüller, “Geburstschrein und Geburtshaus,” 31.

³⁴⁶³ *Wb* I, 422.5.

³⁴⁶⁴ *Wb* III, 8.12.

³⁴⁶⁵ Altenmüller, “Geburstschrein und Geburtshaus,” 32, Abb. 3.

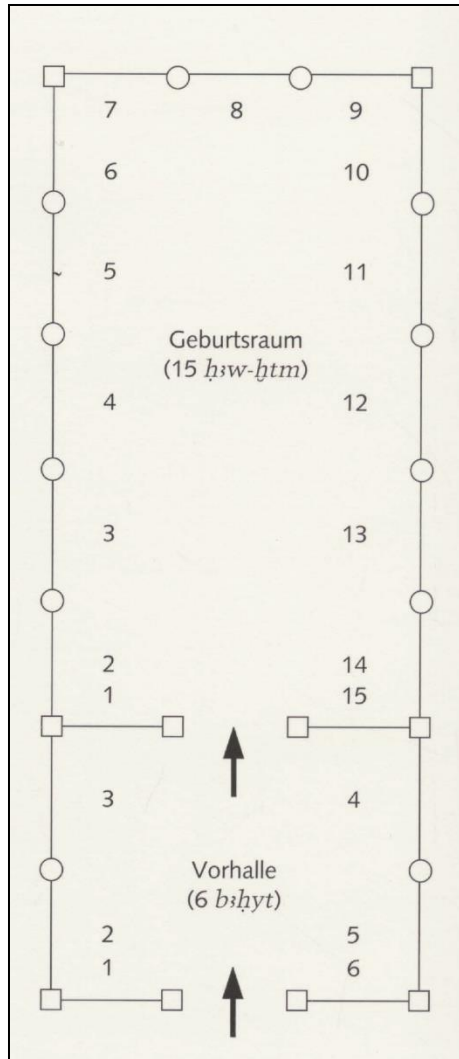


Figure 292 – Reconstruction of Amenemhat II’s birth shrine. Image from Altenmuller, “Geburtsschrein,” Abb. 3.

These early birth arbors appear to be a somewhat comparable concept to the later New Kingdom structures depicted on ostraca. Namely, these structures are temporary in material and center around a bed. Whereas the Old Kingdom structures themselves do not appear connected to childbirth, Egyptians appeared to have adapted these constructions to take on a birth-bed connotation during the Middle Kingdom and especially the New Kingdom. Likewise, the birth-bed concept occurred in tomb scenes depicting the bedroom with wands, as well as bedroom objects. With their location at mortuary temples and chapels, these Old Kingdom structures bear

similarity with the later New Kingdom birth scenes, the most important moment of which occurs on a bed.³⁴⁶⁶

7.3.2 New Kingdom Royal Birth Scenes

The sequence from divine conception to post-birth is recorded in a sequence of fifteen frames in the North Wing of the Middle Colonnade of the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahari³⁴⁶⁷ and on the western wall of Room XIII of Luxor Temple.³⁴⁶⁸ Fragments of another representation of the same sequence of images comes from the Ramesseum³⁴⁶⁹ as well as the Mut Temple of Karnak.³⁴⁷⁰ While both more complete series of scenes have some minor differences, the overall structure and imagery of the birth sequence is the same.

The divine birth began with Amun announcing to twelve gods that he will go to earth to impregnate the queen-mother. After this divine impregnation, Khnum fashioned the body and *kꜥ* of the king which generally means gestation.³⁴⁷¹ The breath of life is provided by Hehet in the Deir el-Bahari version, as symbol of everlasting life and protector of women in labor at time of delivery.³⁴⁷² When the time of the delivery arrived, both Khnum and Hehet guided the pregnant queen to the delivery room.³⁴⁷³ This relationship between Hehet and Khnum, the creator god who formed the world with the silt brought by the Nile floodwaters, is significant.³⁴⁷⁴ As discussed

³⁴⁶⁶ Altenmüller, "Geburstschrein und Geburtshaus," 33; Weinder, *Geburts- und Wochenbettsdarstellungen*, 3

³⁴⁶⁷ PM II², 348-9 (16)-(21); Naville, *Deir el-Bahari II*, 46-55; Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 1-5: Version D.

³⁴⁶⁸ PM II², 326-327 (152); Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 6-7: Version L.

³⁴⁶⁹ Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 7-8: Version M; PM II², 473; G.A. Gaballa, "New Evidence of the Birth of Pharaoh," *Or* 36 (1967): 299-304; L. Habachi, "La reine Touy, femme de Séthi I, et ses proches parents inconnus," *RdE* 21 (1969): 27-47.

³⁴⁷⁰ PM II², 271(8)-(10); Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 8-9: Version K.

³⁴⁷¹ Graindorge, "La naissance divine de la reine Hatchepsout," 28.

³⁴⁷² Ibid.

³⁴⁷³ The depiction of the pregnant queen, with only a slight bump to indicate pregnancy, is quite similar to a depiction of a pregnant mourner from a scene from the Old Kingdom tomb of Ankhmahor (Kanawati and Hassan, *Ankhmahor*, pl. 56, lower register).

³⁴⁷⁴ Lévêque, *Grenouilles*, 53-54; D. Bonneau, *La Crue du Nil divinité égyptienne* (Paris, 1964), 233-234.

above, these two deities also participated in the royal births described in the Westcar Papyrus. In Luxor, Hathor stood in the place of Heqet. Given the popularity of this goddess in the 18th Dynasty, and her connection to fertility, her appearance in the Luxor scene is particularly appropriate.³⁴⁷⁵

The next scene (IX) depicts the birth (Figure 293), with Isis and Nephthys serving as midwives.³⁴⁷⁶ Interestingly, while the scene from Deir el-Bahari portrays the queen already holding the newborn child in her arms, whom the kneeling midwife before her has given, the Luxor scene shows the labor still ongoing, with the nurses to the right of the main image holding and tending to the *kꜣ* of the king.³⁴⁷⁷ Amun had already given to Hatshepsut in the womb his spirit, his power, his prestige, his magic, and his royal dignity, and the other deities promised her dominion.³⁴⁷⁸ The birth scene in particular bears similarity to the depiction of successful birth from the Abydos birth brick,³⁴⁷⁹ wherein the midwives are in position for childbirth while the mother already holds the newborn. Likewise, both the royal scenes³⁴⁸⁰ and the Abydos brick depict the woman on a throne chair. Given the close association of the throne-chair with Isis,³⁴⁸¹ the throne in these scenes may imply a connection between the mother and the goddess, as is the case for a number of the medical/magical papyri from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom.

³⁴⁷⁵ *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 73.

³⁴⁷⁶ *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, Taf. 9 ; Naville, *Deir El-Bahari I*, pl. 51.

³⁴⁷⁷ *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 96.

³⁴⁷⁸ Feucht, *Das Kind*, 105, N.473: J. Osing, "Die Patenschaft der Götter für die Königin Hatschepsut," in *Fragen an die Altägyptische Literatur, Studein zum Gedenken an Eberhard Otto*, ed. J. Assmann et al. (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1977), 363f.

³⁴⁷⁹ See above in § 7.2.1.

³⁴⁸⁰ Feucht, *Das Kind*, 102, N.453: Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 93f. U. Tf. 9, Scene IX L. Brunner rejected the notion it was a birth stool contra G. Jequier, "Matériaux pour servir à l'établissement d'un dictionnaire d'archéologie égyptienne," *BIFAO* 19 (1922): 39, but rather the throne of the queen mother.

³⁴⁸¹ Ex: Wilkinson, *Complete Gods and Goddesses*, 148.

In both royal birth reliefs, the scene has three rows, the upper occurring on top of a bed with lion-headed posts, the second row within the same space or time as the first, and the third row below the bed. Notably, the text for this scene includes Meskhenet, whose determinative here was two birth-bricks, spoke in this scene, promising protection to the newborn king.³⁴⁸² Graindorge interpreted the bed as a bed of bricks for birth,³⁴⁸³ though the bed is a form seen associated with elite contexts not related to birth.³⁴⁸⁴

In the second register of the scene, a bunch of kneeling gods, predominantly with human or crocodile heads, offer *ḥnḥ*-signs while two male gods with palm branches on their heads, representing the god Heh, offered the king a long reign.³⁴⁸⁵ Given the connection of crocodiles to apotropaia and Spell P from P. Berlin 3027 discussed above, the presence of these animal-headed deities was likely apotropaic.³⁴⁸⁶

In the bottom register, under the bed, kneeling deities to the left kneel before a *w3s* and *s3* sign. To the right end of this register, Bes and Taweret stood under the bed to ensure there are no nefarious influences during the transition of birth.³⁴⁸⁷ Scholars have noted that the appearance of these two deities here paralleled their occurrence as statues under the beds and decoration on beds in funerary reliefs.³⁴⁸⁸ Perhaps these representations indicate the placement of Aha/Bes and Ipet/Taweret figurines under beds, particularly appropriate for childbirth, both during the New

³⁴⁸² IX Db: Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 98.

³⁴⁸³ Graindorge, “La naissance divine de la reine Hatchepsout,” 28.

³⁴⁸⁴ Ex: Killen, *Ancient Egyptian Furniture* III, v.3, 88, 149-150.

³⁴⁸⁵ On the symbolism of Heh and the palm branches, see Wilkinson, *Reading Egyptian Art*, 30 (C11), 119 (M4), and references therein.

³⁴⁸⁶ Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 103; Hornung and Staehelin, *Skarabäen*, 124. See above in § 5.2.4.4.1 and § 6.2.9.

³⁴⁸⁷ Graindorge, “La naissance divine de la reine Hatchepsout,” 30; Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, n. 3, citing the appearance of these deities in reliefs as statues under the bed and as decoration on beds.

³⁴⁸⁸ Graindorge, “La naissance divine de la reine Hatschepsout,” 30; Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, n. 3, citing Bruyere, *Rapport 1934-1935*, 3e partie, 107; statues besides beds: T. Säve-Söderbergh, *Four eighteenth dynasty tombs* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1957), Taf. 37 (tomb of Sure).

Kingdom and, given their earlier association with beds and bedroom items, the Middle Kingdom. However, compared to the Middle Kingdom, the New Kingdom is more explicit in showing the deities in relief along with people, as opposed to previous depictions of objects associated with these deities such as wands, cobra staffs, and Hathor standards.

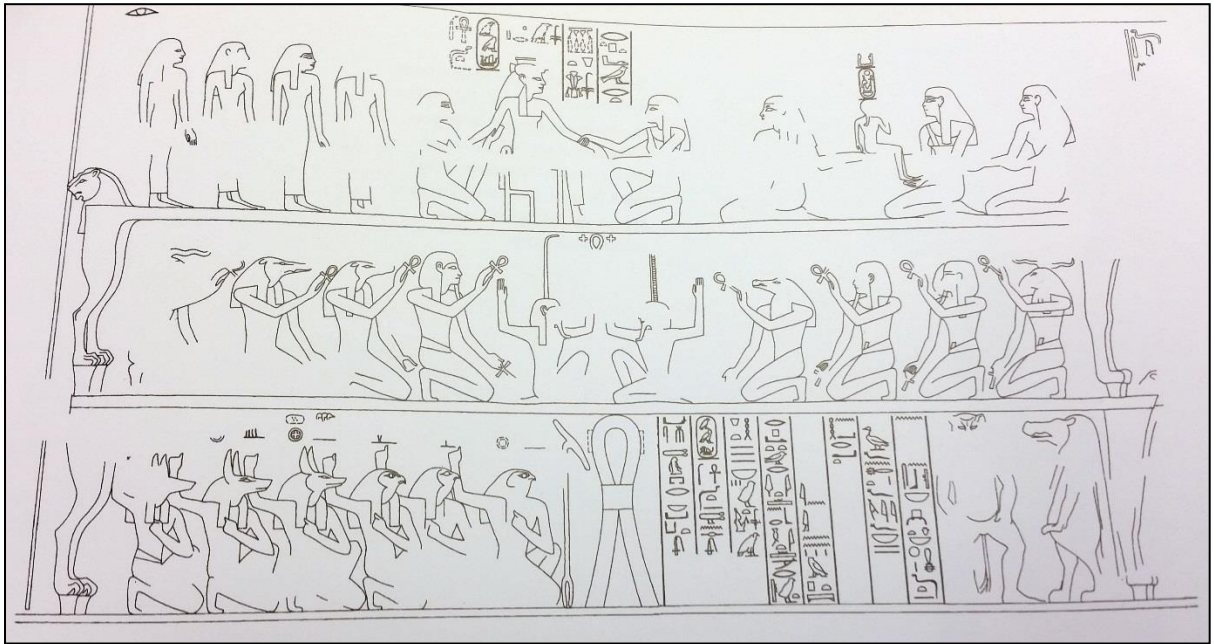


Figure 293 – Birth scene from Mortuary Temple of Amenhotep III. Image from Brunner-Traut, *Die alten Ägypter*, fig. 220.

In the next scene,³⁴⁸⁹ the queen sits on a ceremonial bed with lion heads on each side, with a row of Isis-knots below. While Selket sat behind and tended to the queen, two goddesses wearing a sun disk³⁴⁹⁰ face her to the right and breast feed the child and, presumably, the *k3*. These goddesses are likely to have been Hathor or Hathor and Sechat-Hor,³⁴⁹¹ given the imagery of two kings each suckling on a Hathor cow just below the register with the bed. Rather than related to regular childbirth, this nursing symbolized the transfer of divine powers to the king,

³⁴⁸⁹ Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, Szene X.

³⁴⁹⁰ Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 109: with double feathers for Amunhotep III, but without feathers in the Deir el-Bahari version.

³⁴⁹¹ Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 131.

akin to a coronation.³⁴⁹² To the right, in three registers, various male and female deities each hold the child while their heads turn away from the child. The standard on their heads switch between ovals with an *h* and *hb*. Importantly, Amun in this scene recognized the child as his, in an act that may be similar to that in Papyrus Westcar.³⁴⁹³

The birth scenes represented an iconography that was characteristic of much of the New Kingdom: that of the birth-bed. In this type of imagery, Egyptians emphasized the bed itself, as well as birth deities, particularly Bes and Taweret. The representation of the *s3*-sign with Bes and Taweret at the bottom of the bed paralleled the contemporary bed panels.³⁴⁹⁴ A number of features of this depiction, such as the already-born child, had Middle Kingdom precedent. We have already seen the importance of Isis and Nephthys in birth magic in Berlin 3027 spell V and as midwives supporting the parturient in Papyrus Westcar.³⁴⁹⁵ Likewise, Meskhenet predicted the future in both Papyrus Westcar and the royal birth scenes.

Whereas the apotropaic motifs constituted a subset of Middle Kingdom birth iconography, the birth-bed was a main feature of the standard New Kingdom imagery. The latter both appeared on royal temple scenes and in ostraca from the town of Deir el-Medina. Additionally, this later iconography occurred predominantly in domestic contexts, whereas the apotropaia belonged largely to the funerary realm. While the royal scenes detailed the divine conception to shortly after birth, the Wochenlaube scenes concentrated on the birth and post-birth periods. This more focused imagery also represented motifs not seen in the royal birth scenes,

³⁴⁹² Brunner, *Geburt des Gottkönigs*, 131; L. Bell, “The Luxor Temple and the Cult of the Royal KA,” *JNES* 44.4 (1985): 265-6.

³⁴⁹³ See above in § 5.4.

³⁴⁹⁴ See above in § 2.2.2; § 2.5.2.

³⁴⁹⁵ See above in §§ 5.2.4.1 and 5.4.

namely Renenutet and convolvulus vines. These motifs appeared to have been more appropriate for private religious practices, hence why they did not appear in the royal scenes.

7.4 Wochenlaube Scenes

From the village of Deir el-Medina,³⁴⁹⁶ excavators found at least 73 painted ostraca scenes of women in arbors decorated with plants, often lying or seated on a bed or stool. Unprovenanced parallels likely came from the Theban region as well.³⁴⁹⁷ Many of these scenes illustrate children and servants accompanying the woman. These ostraca appear directly related to domestic wall paintings.³⁴⁹⁸ The iconography of these scenes bears significant similarity to that of the *lit clos* and woman-on-bed figurines, so previous scholarship had interpreted the latter two based on the former.

7.4.1 Iconography

While the ostraca bear similar iconography, no two scenes are identical. The decoration of the scenes have several themes of motifs, namely the depiction of the woman, servants, the child, plants, objects of the toilette, furniture, and, sometimes, animals. Each of these themes occurred on other objects likely related to birth and fertility, indicating a shared iconography.

The woman often occurs either nude or wearing a pleated dress or cape, her hair commonly gathered on top with locks cascading down (Figure 294). She sometimes wears a

³⁴⁹⁶ Brunner-Traut, *Scherbenbilder*, 69-71, cat. 65-69 (Berlin 21451, 21453, 21477, 21773, 21461); Brunner-Traut, "Wochenlaube," 11-30; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2335-2389; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2858-2867; M. Werbrouck, "Ostraca à figurés," *BMRAH* 4th series 25th year (1953): 96-7 (Brussels E 6382). Brunner-Traut ("Wochenlaube," 12-14, note 16) mentioned six unpublished ostraca held in the Museo Egizio in Turin, but not whether they came from excavated context.

³⁴⁹⁷ Brunner-Traut, *Scherbenbilder*, 71-2, cat. 70-1 (Munich 1543, A 11); L. Keimer, *Sur un Certain nombre d'ostraca figurés, de plaquettes sculptées, etc., provenant de la nécropole thébaine et encore inédits* (Études d'égyptologie 3; Cairo: IFAO, 1941), 3, Cat. 13; Werbrouck, "Ostraca à figurés," 98 (Brussels E 6778); B. Peterson, "Zeichnungen aus einer Totenstadt," *MedMus-Bull* 7-8 (1973): 103-104, cat. 132-137 (Stockholm MM 14005, 14070, 14137, 14061, 14045, and 14030).

³⁴⁹⁸ Peterson, "Zeichnungen aus einer Totenstadt," 33. See § 7.6 below.

perfume cone on her head³⁴⁹⁹ or a collar necklace.³⁵⁰⁰ A child most commonly accompanies the woman, either resting with her on the bed,³⁵⁰¹ or, in several cases, nursing from her.³⁵⁰² Whenever the main woman is fully clothed, she tends not to nurse the infant.³⁵⁰³ While Brunner-Traut assumes that the unusual hairstyle of some of scenes related to a ritual loosening of knots before childbirth,³⁵⁰⁴ several ostraca depict a nursing woman with a regular hairstyle.³⁵⁰⁵ Interestingly, parallel nursing scenes appear on several New Kingdom stelae,³⁵⁰⁶ including one where the nursing woman sits along with a mirror and a kohl vessel (Figure 295), items that likewise appear in the ostraca. In one unusual instance, the woman holds in her right hand a white object that appears to be a bread loaf (Figure 296).³⁵⁰⁷ Interestingly, one painted ostraca (Figure 294)³⁵⁰⁸ depicted the mother, female servant, and infant with blue hair, which is similar to the depiction of women from Side A of the Abydos birth brick.³⁵⁰⁹ This representation may be a continuation in a way of equating the woman with Hathor, which is consistent with her greater occurrence in private objects of the New Kingdom.

³⁴⁹⁹ Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2335, 2341, and 2349; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV no. 2862; Munich A 11; Stockholm MM 14005, 14030, 14061, 14070.

³⁵⁰⁰ Berlin 21453, 21461, 21477; Stockholm MM 14005; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2342 and 2357; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, nos. 2864 and 2867.

³⁵⁰¹ Keimer, *Ostraca figurés*, Cat. 13; Stockholm 14061, 14137; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue*, nos. 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2344, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2354, 2355 and 2383; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, no. 2863.

³⁵⁰² Berlin 21451, 21477; Stockholm MM 14005; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, no. 2339; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, no. 2858.

³⁵⁰³ Brunner-Traut, "Wochenlaube," 27. Exceptions include Berlin 21477 (possibly); Stockholm MM 14005; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2335 (possibly), 2344.

³⁵⁰⁴ Brunner-Traut, "Wochenlaube," 26-27.

³⁵⁰⁵ Stockholm MM 14005; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2335 (probably), 2344.

³⁵⁰⁶ Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* III, 83, fig. 42 and n.4; B. Bruyère, "Un fragment de fresque de Deir el Médineh," *BIFAO* 22 (1923): 126, fig. 3; Lacau, *Stèles du Nouvel Empire*, no. 34079 (pl. XL), 34117 (pl. LIII), and 24125 (pl. LIV).

³⁵⁰⁷ Peterson, "Zeichnungen aus einer Totenstadt," 103, cat. 134 (Stockholm MM 14137).

³⁵⁰⁸ Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, pl. 52, no. 2399.

³⁵⁰⁹ See above, § 7.2.1.

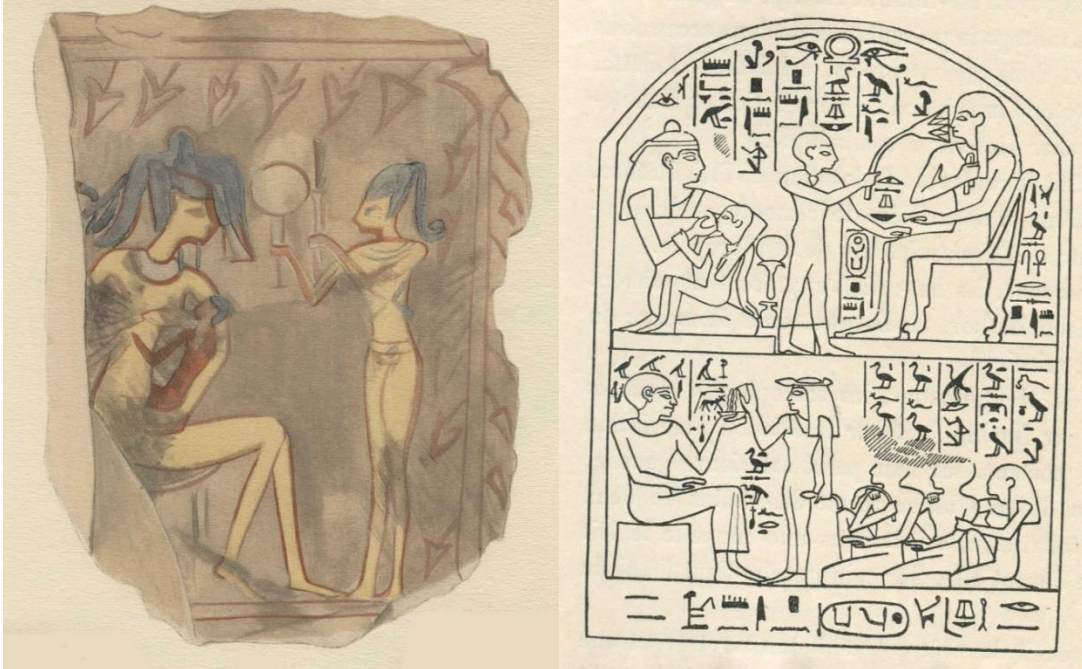


Figure 294 (left) – Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue II*, pl. 52, no. 2399.
Figure 295 (right) – Louvre E 3447. Bruyère, "Un fragment de fresque de Deir el Médineh," *BIFAO* 22 (1923): 126, fig. 3.



Figure 296 – Stockholm MM 14137. Image from Peterson, "Zeichnungen aus einer Totenstadt," pl. 70, cat. 134.

Objects of the toilette are another common attribute in these scenes, often presented to the woman by a female servant. Cups are especially common,³⁵¹⁰ as well as mirrors³⁵¹¹ and kohl jars.³⁵¹² As we have seen above,³⁵¹³ some cups are associated with children, so there may be some significance to the frequency of this motif in the ostraca despite the time difference between the former and latter. The presence of kohl jars in the scenes, given the occurrence of apotropaic imagery on early-to-mid 18th Dynasty containers,³⁵¹⁴ may imply fertility and bedroom protection. As we have discussed above,³⁵¹⁵ mirrors appear associated with certain types of nude female figurines.

Another feature of the ostraca scenes are furniture, most commonly beds. The vast majority of the beds have the frontal Bes-image as legs (Figure 298, upper),³⁵¹⁶ though there are examples of beds with papyriform³⁵¹⁷ (Figure 298, lower) or feminoform legs.³⁵¹⁸ In one interesting case (Figure 297), the Bes-posts stand on top of lily capitals as pedestals, with the left figure playing the lute, the right with hands on hips, and the middle, winged, raising a knife in his left hand and grasping a snake in his right hand. The appearance of Bes in these bedroom scenes is in keeping with his protective role of women and children as well as sleepers, as seen in the

³⁵¹⁰ Berlin 21461; Munich 1543; Stockholm MM 14045; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2336, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2345, 2346, 2351, 2352, 2361, 2363, 2369, 2372, 2375, 2384; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, no. 2862.

³⁵¹¹ Berlin 21451, 21773; Brussels E 6382; Stockholm MM 14005; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2337, 2339, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2353, 2356, 2369; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, nos. 2858 and 2862.

³⁵¹² Berlin 21451, 21773; Brussels E 6382; Munich 1543; Stockholm MM 14005; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2337, 2339, 2343, 2345, 2353, 2356, 2369; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, no. 2862.

³⁵¹³ See § 6.4.

³⁵¹⁴ See § 6.2.16.1.

³⁵¹⁵ See §§ 3.2.1.3 and 3.2.6.

³⁵¹⁶ Berlin 21451, 21477; Stockholm MM 14005; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2337, 2340, 2343, 2344, 2346, 2347, 2353, 2358, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2382, 2385, 2387; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, nos. 2859, 2862, 2863; Romano, *Bes-Image*, 59, Cat. Nos. 183-184 (repository unknown), 185 (Cairo IFAO 3003bis), 186 (Cairo IFAO 3557), 187 (repository unknown), 188 (Paris Louvre E. 14336), 189 (Cairo IFAO 3543), 190 (Cairo IFAO 3310), 191 (Cairo IFAO 3753), 192 (Cairo IFAO 3533), and 193 (Cairo IFAO 3544).

³⁵¹⁷ Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, no. 2338.

³⁵¹⁸ Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, no. 2376.

royal birth scenes and later mammisi.³⁵¹⁹ Stools also regularly occurred,³⁵²⁰ with several examples of women seated on stools instead of a bed.³⁵²¹ However, as discussed above,³⁵²² the stools do not appear to be related to childbirth. Other furniture types are far less commonly shown in the birth arbor, including mats,³⁵²³ cushioned seats,³⁵²⁴ headrests,³⁵²⁵ and an armchair.³⁵²⁶

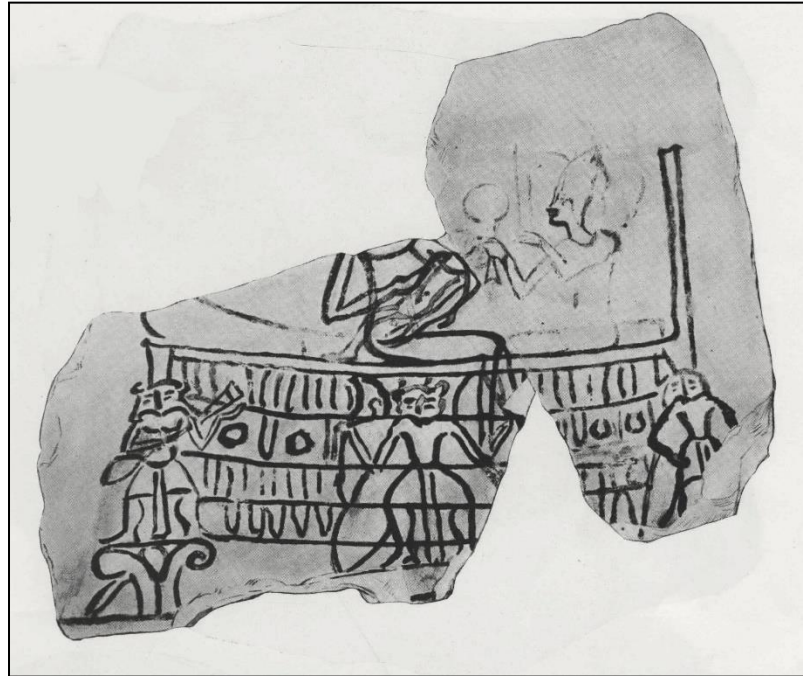


Figure 297 - Berlin 21451. Image from Brunner-Traut, *Altägyptischen Scherbenbilder*, pl. 25, no. 65.

³⁵¹⁹ Brunner-Traut, “Wochenlaube,” 24. See §5.4.2 above.

³⁵²⁰ Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2335, 2339, 2355, 2362, 2373, 2376; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, no. 2863.

³⁵²¹ Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2379, 2383.

³⁵²² See § 7.2.4.

³⁵²³ Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, no. 2374.

³⁵²⁴ Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* IV, no. 2858.

³⁵²⁵ Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* IV, no. 2865.

³⁵²⁶ Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, no. 2336.

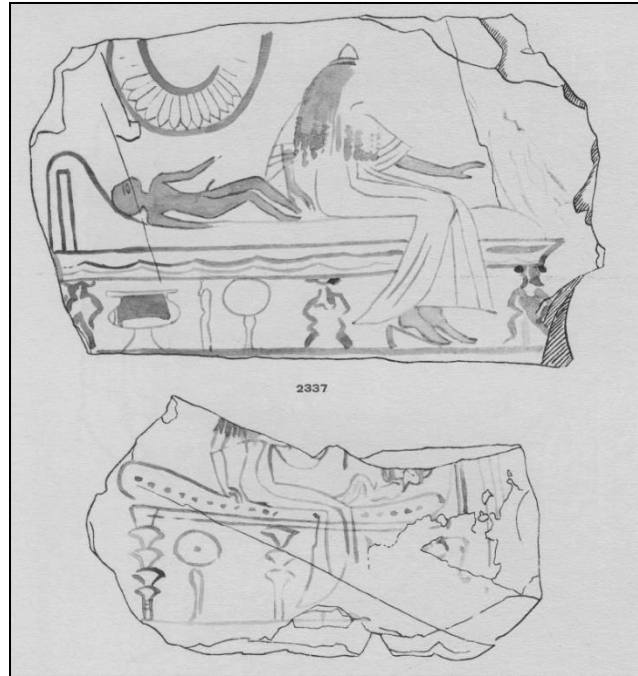


Figure 298 – Wochenlaube with Bes and papyriform bed legs. Image from Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue II*, pl. I, no. 2337 and 2338.

Several of the Wochenlaube appeared to represent a birth pavilion or pylon, as mentioned in some New Kingdom medical/magical spells. In two cases,³⁵²⁷ lotus columns flank either side of the scene, with an upper frame running across on the top from which convolvulus leaves hang down. In a so-far unique scene (Figure 299),³⁵²⁸ the framework runs both on the sides and top of the scene, with some type of inner lining hanging down. In both types of depictions, the effect of the frames created a horizon shape without the sun (☐). Presumably, the birth of the child him/herself would have represented the sun, as in many of medical/magical spells and other birth iconography discussed above.

³⁵²⁷ See above, Figures 286 and 294.

³⁵²⁸ Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue II*, Cat. 2345.



Figure 299 – Wochenlaube scene within framework. Image from Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, pl. LIII. 2345.

Servants, predominantly young girls,³⁵²⁹ regularly occur on the ostraca, often holding cup items to the woman. In one case, a group of women offer goods behind the woman (Figure 300).³⁵³⁰ Another ostraca depicted one of the servants as a young boy dressed in a kilt.³⁵³¹ A few ostraca depict a smaller black male figure (Figure 301).³⁵³² According to Pinch, this figure may be a dwarf attendant enacting the role of Bes and dancing to ensure the protection of the newborn child. Yet, no example has clearly malformed proportions of iconography recalling Bes, so the figure could also be a child, perhaps a Nubian.³⁵³³

³⁵²⁹ Berlin 21451; Brussels E 6382; Munich 1543, A 11; Stockholm MM 14061, 14070; Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2335, 2336, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2346, 2351, 2352, 2354, 2355, 2358, 2368, 2377, 2383; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, no. 2858.

³⁵³⁰ Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, no. 2344.

³⁵³¹ Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* IV, no. 2858.

³⁵³² Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, no. 2344; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, no. 2858.

³⁵³³ Pinch, “Childbirth and female figurines,” 409-410; see example model bed Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 141-2, pl. XLIV and on ostrakon Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* I, 71 (VA 2344), pl. LIII. Cf. the dancing boy on *ibid* II, 187 (VA 2858), pl. CXX.

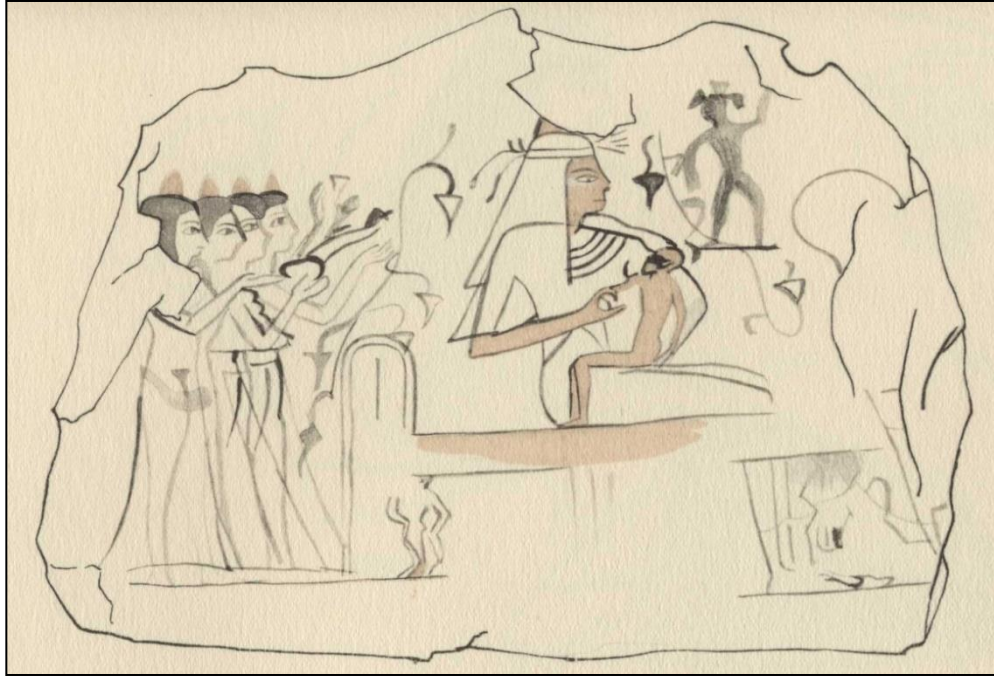


Figure 300 – Scene of women offering goods. Image from Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue II*, pl. 53, no. 2344.

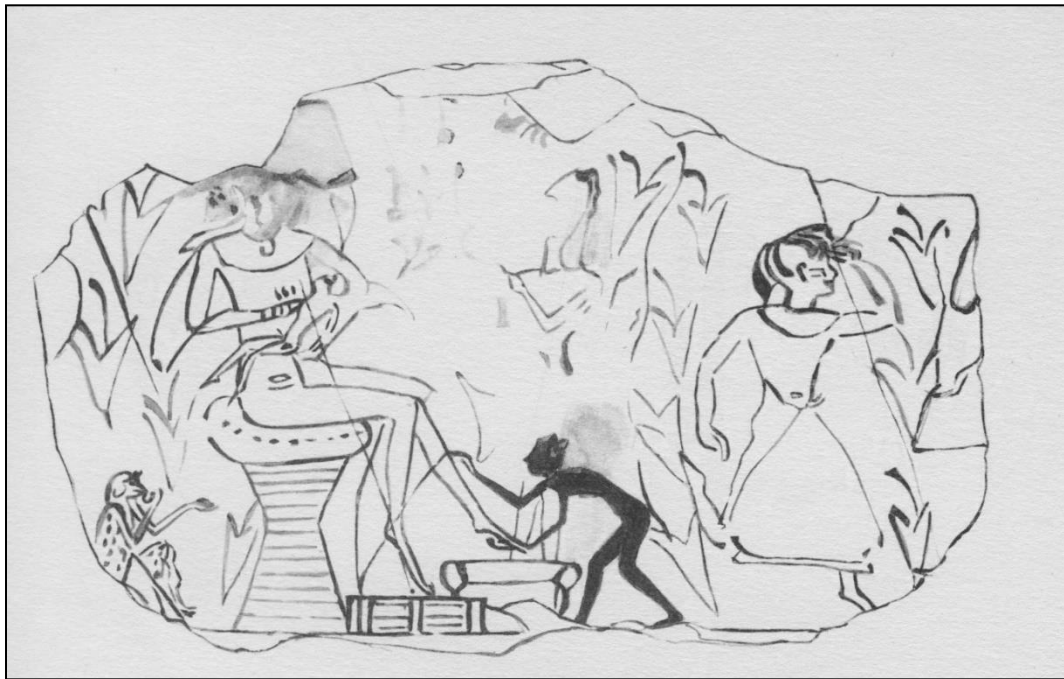


Figure 301 – Mother on stool with monkey and male servants. Image from Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue IV*, pl. CXX, no. 2858.

Animal themes are relatively rare in these scenes. In one instance, a lizard occurs in the scene.³⁵³⁴ Another couple of ostraca depict a monkey (Figures 301, 302), which is perhaps associated with fertility. The most common animal is the snake, either painted red or red with black stripes, which occurs in alongside the bed.³⁵³⁵ Brunner-Traut had considered this serpent as possibly a protective snake called a *Krh.t*,³⁵³⁶ which would presumably protect a family's lineage.³⁵³⁷ Recently, Evans had argued that the snake may be Renenutet, in her role in ensuring the flow of breast milk. Based on the appearance of a cobra deity resembling Renenutet on wands and the Abydos birth brick,³⁵³⁸ the latter theory is more probable.³⁵³⁹

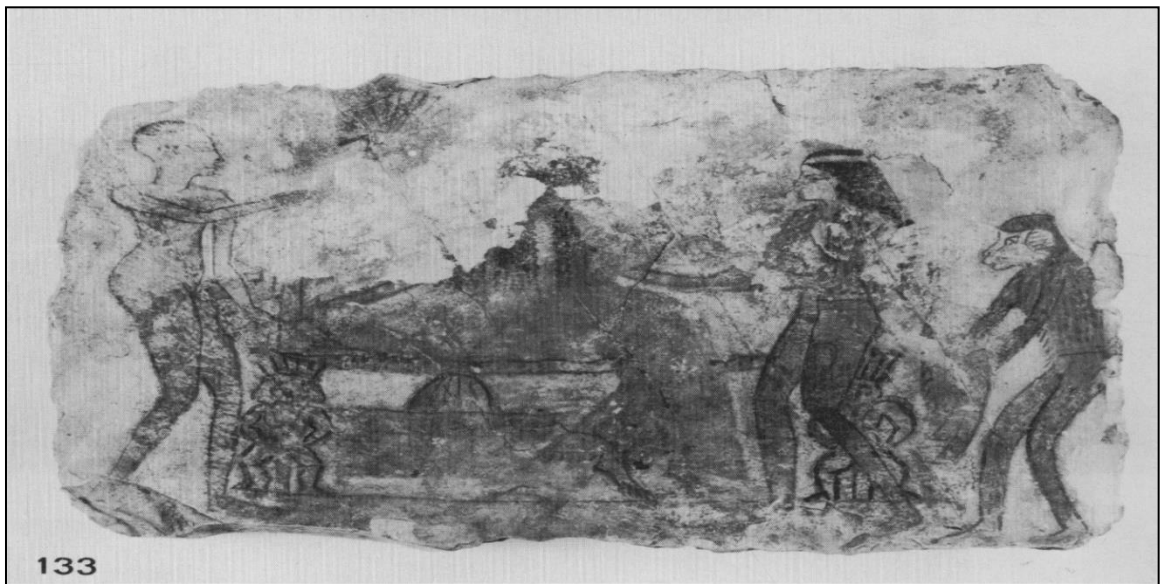


Figure 302 – Stockholm MM 14070. Image from Peterson, "Zeichnungen aus einer Totenstadt," pl. 70, no. 133.

³⁵³⁴ Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue II*, no. 2364.

³⁵³⁵ Berlin 21461, 21773; Munich 1543; Stockholm 14061, 14070; Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue II*, nos. 2335, 2337, 2340, 2341, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348; *Catalogue IV*, nos. 2860, 2861, 2862, 2863.

³⁵³⁶ *Wb.* V, 63, no. 5-9; For additional references, see Leitz, *Lexikon VI*, 224-5.

³⁵³⁷ Brunner-Traut, "Wochenlaube," 24.

³⁵³⁸ See § 6.2.12 and § 7.2.1 above.

³⁵³⁹ Evans, "The goddess Renenutet," 50.

Finally, plants appear to be another significant element in the Wochenlaube scenes. Indeed, the only extant inscription from such an ostraca reads, “Beautiful sacred pole/plant.”³⁵⁴⁰ Motifs include garlands of flowers³⁵⁴¹ papyrus stalks,³⁵⁴² and lotuses,³⁵⁴³ as well as the papyriform bed-legs discussed above. In one variant, the scene appears to take place in a wine trellis, as seen with the grapes above the female figure’s head (Figure 303).³⁵⁴⁴ The most prominent plant, however, is the convolvulus vine.³⁵⁴⁵



Figure 303 – Brussels E 6778. Image from Global Egyptian Museum, <http://www.globalegyptianmuseum.org/record.aspx?id=1120&lan=A>.

³⁵⁴⁰ *Wb.* II, 965, 18-19. Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* IV, no. 2858.

³⁵⁴¹ Berlin 21461; Munich 1543; Stockholm MM 14005, 14070, 14137; Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, no. 2337; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, 2859, 2860, 2861.

³⁵⁴² Berlin 21773; Brussels E 6382; Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, no. 2339.

³⁵⁴³ Berlin 21461; Stockholm MM 14030, 14045; Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue* II, nos. 2336, 2341, 2351, 2358, 2367.

³⁵⁴⁴ Brunner-Traut, “Wochenlaube,” 17.

³⁵⁴⁵ Berlin 21773; Munich 1543, A 11; Stockholm MM 14005, 14137; Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue*, nos. 2339, 2344, 2346, 2350, 2367, 2387; *ibid.*, *Catalogue* IV, 2858.

While bowers of plants³⁵⁴⁶ and convolvulus occur in other contexts,³⁵⁴⁷ there may be particular meaning behind the convolvulus. Previous scholarship has usually assumed the plant was in some way used for childbirth.³⁵⁴⁸ The Egyptian term for this plant may have been *sn-wt.t*, which medical/magical spells used for treatments of conditions similar to those for which more modern North Africans used convolvulus, particularly bleeding.³⁵⁴⁹ In a scene from the Turin Erotic Papyrus, the plant is associated with a woman receptive to sexual intercourse, in contrast to two girls who spurned advances.³⁵⁵⁰ Notably, the plant featured on some woman-on-bed figurines, as well as the ostraca,³⁵⁵¹ which indicates that it was part of a standardized New Kingdom birth iconography.

While the Wochenlaube ostraca themselves only originated from Deir el-Medina, much of the imagery was widespread in the New Kingdom. Bes-decorated beds occurred in Thebes, Deir el-Medina, Gurob, and Amarna, whereas New Kingdom headrests depicting the god occurred in sites such as Sedment, Gurob, and Deir el-Medina.³⁵⁵² Likewise, New Kingdom domestic figurines occurred in Kom Rabi'a and Amarna in addition to Deir el-Medina.³⁵⁵³ The ostraca also bear parallels with cotemporary nude female figurines. Women wearing cones occurred in Type D and F figurines,³⁵⁵⁴ while some Type E and F figurines depicted women with mirrors.³⁵⁵⁵ The convolvulus appeared on woman-on-bed figurines from Rifeh and Gurob, while the red snake occurred in figurines from Gurob and Akhmim, as well as Deir el-Medina and

³⁵⁴⁶ For this, see Brunner-Traut, "Wochenlaube," 17-19, notes 32-44.

³⁵⁴⁷ Brunner-Traut, "Wochenlaube," 19, notes 45-47.

³⁵⁴⁸ Manniche, *An ancient Egyptian herbal*, 84-5.

³⁵⁴⁹ See Miller, "Was Convolvulus Erotic?", 247-9.

³⁵⁵⁰ J. A. Omlin, *Der Papyrus 55001 und seine satirisch-erotischen Zeichnungen und Ischriften* (Turin: Edizioni d'arte Fratelli Pozzo, 1973), 49-50, pl. 11, 13, 17-17, 19; Miller, "Was Convolvulus Erotic?", 252.

³⁵⁵¹ See § 3.2.6.

³⁵⁵² See above, § 2.2.2, figs. 18-20 and 21-23 respectively.

³⁵⁵³ See § 2.2.2, figs. 13-16.

³⁵⁵⁴ See above, §§ 3.2.4 and 3.2.6.

³⁵⁵⁵ See § 3.2.5, fig. 126; § 3.2.6, fig. 136.

Thebes.³⁵⁵⁶ One figurine from Gurob³⁵⁵⁷ even depicts a nurse holding a child, in addition to the mother. This iconography, in addition, had its origins in the Middle Kingdom in a number of bedroom-related objects.³⁵⁵⁸

7.4.2 Function

There is some debate whether the arbors featured in the scenes represented actual structures³⁵⁵⁹ or were merely symbolic of the transition of birth.³⁵⁶⁰ Given the general lack of room within the house, some scholars proposed Egyptians built such structures either in an outside garden or on the roof.³⁵⁶¹ The former does not seem feasible, since there was little in room between the houses at Deir el-Medina for a garden.³⁵⁶² While the roof was a known sleeping place for ancient Egyptians in the summer,³⁵⁶³ the roof would have been an impractical place to take up a woman suffering birth pangs and it would not have provided much protection from the elements.³⁵⁶⁴ Brunner-Traut's theory of the bower decoration being erected within the regular sleeping room makes the most sense,³⁵⁶⁵ at least for the non-summer months. There is some uncertainty, if the structures existed, whether they functioned just for birth or post-partum isolation or both.³⁵⁶⁶ While there are no texts associated with the ostraca, London spell 33 does mention the pavilion of birth.³⁵⁶⁷ Given some of the similarities between these scenes and those

³⁵⁵⁶ See § 3.2.6, figs. 137-139 and § 3.2.6, figs. 138-139, respectively.

³⁵⁵⁷ See above, § 3.2.6, fig. 132.

³⁵⁵⁸ See above, §§ 2.2.1, 34; 2.5.1, 76, fig. 45; 6.2.1, 404-5, fig. 225; 6.2.12, fig. 244; 6.2.16.1.

³⁵⁵⁹ Brunner-Traut, "Wochenlaube," 20-21, 34.

³⁵⁶⁰ Kemp, "Wall paintings," 52; Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*, 176.

³⁵⁶¹ Janssen and Janssen, *Growing up*, 4; Loose, "Laborious 'Rites de Passage,'" 23; Meskell, *Archaeologies of Social Life*, 100; Toivari-Viitala, *Women at Deir el-Medina*,

³⁵⁶² Brunner-Traut, "Wochenlaube," 20; Marshall, *Maternité et petite enfance*, 95.

³⁵⁶³ N. Moeller, *The Archaeology of Urbanism in Ancient Egypt: From the Predynastic Period to the End of the Middle Kingdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 10.

³⁵⁶⁴ Marshall, *Maternité et petite enfance*, 96.

³⁵⁶⁵ Brunner-Traut, "Wochenlaube," 20; B. Lesko, "Household and domestic religion in ancient Egypt," 205.

³⁵⁶⁶ B. Lesko, "Household and domestic religion," 206.

³⁵⁶⁷ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 30-1, 164-5, n. 393; Brunner-Traut, "Wochenlaube," 21; B. Lesko, "Household and domestic religion," 206. See above in § 5.2.4.3.

on domestic wall paintings, these ostraca may have represented drafts of planned domestic paintings.

The New Kingdom birth-bed depicted on the Wochenlaube featured a number of elements with Middle Kingdom precedent. The association of Bes and Taweret with beds also occurred in bedroom-related objects of the Middle Kingdom.³⁵⁶⁸ The presence of kohl vessels with apotropaic imagery from the early New Kingdom and the kohl vessels depicted on the Wochenlaube indicated continued association of these items with birth and fertility magic. Mirrors, which some of the ostraca as well as woman-on-bed figurines depicted, appeared to have implied female fertility, since such objects also occurred in the same contexts with Type A nude female figurines.³⁵⁶⁹ If the red snake represented Renenutet, then its presence on the Wochenlaube indicated evidence of the continued role of this goddess from the apotropaia, with modification in size likely for space. Unlike these other motifs, the convolvulus appears to have been a feature created in the New Kingdom.

While the Wochenlaube only occurred in Deir el-Medina, contemporary domestic wall paintings indicate that this imagery was not limited to the town. The birth-bed iconography of the woman on a bed with nurses, convolvulus vines, and birth deities Bes and Taweret likewise occurred on the wall paintings. Notably, there is current scholarly debate whether the raised structures associated with the paintings were the beds themselves.

7.5 Birth Bed or Altar? The *lit clos* of Deir el-Medina and Amarna

In some of the houses at Deir el-Medina, Bruyère excavated raised structures which he referred to as *lit clos* or “box beds”. They bear similarity to the so-called “bins” from the houses

³⁵⁶⁸ See §§ 2.2.1, 2.5.1, and 6.2.16.1.

³⁵⁶⁹ See more above, §§ 3.2.1.3, 3.2.1.4.2, and 3.2.6.

at Amarna, and they may be the same type of structure. Some of these structures bear painted decoration, often of seemingly fertility-related subjects. Over the years, scholars have proposed various theories on the use of these structures.³⁵⁷⁰ With the available evidence, the best explanation is that these features were cult altars pertaining to domestic fertility and ancestor worship.

7.5.1 Context

Most of the *lit clos* appeared in the front rooms of Deir el-Medina houses (Figure 304), which seem to have served as a ritual space. In these front rooms, there are a number of niches.³⁵⁷¹ Indeed, some ancestral busts were placed in niches opposite the elevated structures.³⁵⁷² In C. V, a niche for a bust is within the southeastern corner, adjacent to the elevated structure.³⁵⁷³ In C. VI, three niches are on the opposite wall of the elevated bed.³⁵⁷⁴ Below one of these niches, an ancestor bust was found on the floor.³⁵⁷⁵ Also notable is that 5 out of eight houses with false doors within the living space also had an elevated structure.³⁵⁷⁶

³⁵⁷⁰ See below, § 7.5.3.

³⁵⁷¹ A. Koltsida, *Social Aspects of Ancient Egyptian Domestic Architecture* (BAR 1608; Oxford, 2007), 19.

³⁵⁷² Friedman, "The Meaning of some Anthropoid Busts," 83.

³⁵⁷³ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 305.

³⁵⁷⁴ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 308.

³⁵⁷⁵ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 171 and f. 66.

³⁵⁷⁶ N.O. VI, N.O. XII, S.O. V, S.E. VII, and SE. VIII.

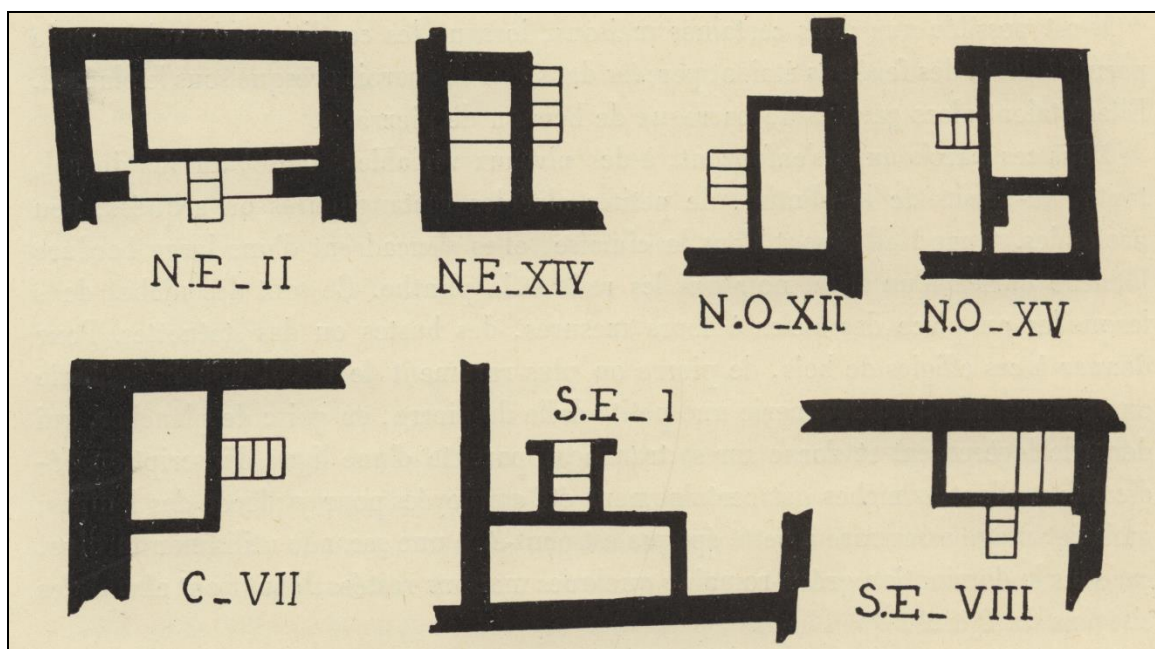


Figure 304 – Locations of *lit clos* structures in Deir el-Medina houses. Image from Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, fig. 17.

7.5.2 Iconography

While many of these structures currently do not have preserved decoration or have simple designs, some retain more elaborate scenes. While generally the walls only preserve the lower sections of this decoration,³⁵⁷⁷ enough usually remains to assess the content of the scenes. These consist most often representations of Bes, a possible Wochenlaube scene, a female dancer, a woman on papyrus boat, and a depiction of two women.

7.5.2.1 Bes

There are two variations of Bes in the painted scenes: a winged Bes and a dancing Bes. In total, representations of Bes appeared on six elevated beds.³⁵⁷⁸ The winged Bes occurred associated with boxed beds in three houses: N.E. X, S.O. VI, and C. VI. House N.E. X contained a complete image of Bes, with feminine breasts, standing in a protective stance with outstretched

³⁵⁷⁷ Kleinke, *Female spaces*, 18.

³⁵⁷⁸ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, 55.

wings, a feathered headdress, and flora in hand. The preserved paint in S.O. VI only depicts the legs.

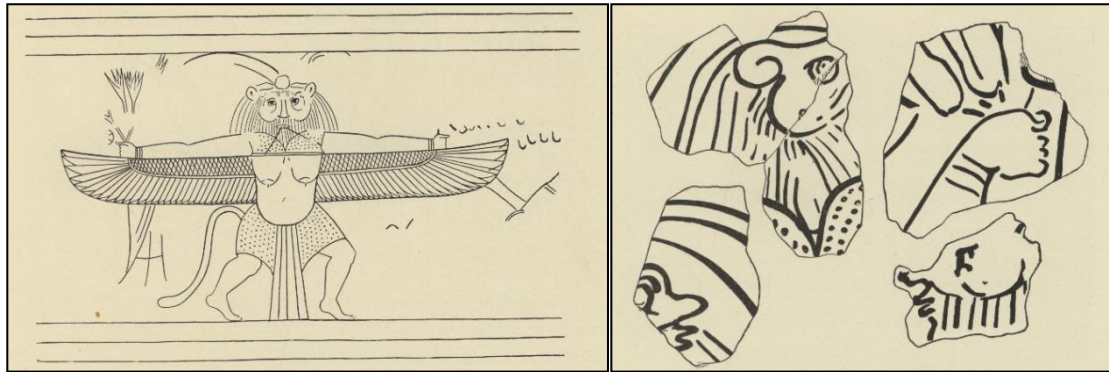


Figure 305 (left) – Winged Bes from lit clos of House N.E. X. Image from Bruyere, *Rapport* 16, fig. 131.
Figure 306 (right) – Fragments of decoration from lit clos in House N.E. X. Image from Bruyere, *Rapport* 16, fig. 133.

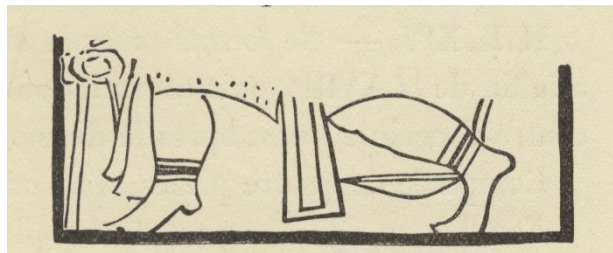


Figure 307 – Decoration from lit clos in House N.E. XIII. Image from Bruyere, *Rapport* 16, fig. 136.



Figure 308 – Frontal Bes mask from lit clos in House S.O. I. Image from Bruyere, *Rapport* 16, fig. 148.

Depictions of dancing Bes-figures occur in Deir el-Medina houses N.E. XII, XIII, and C. V, as well as one house in Amarna (Figure 309). One cannot identify Bes on house C. V, however, according to Bruyère there was a winged image of Bes on the lower section, which is not recorded.³⁵⁷⁹ Another figure from this scene is a male, whose activity is difficult to determine.³⁵⁸⁰ N.E. XII illustrates Bes' head in profile and S.E. IX contained only a clay mask of Bes (Figure 308).

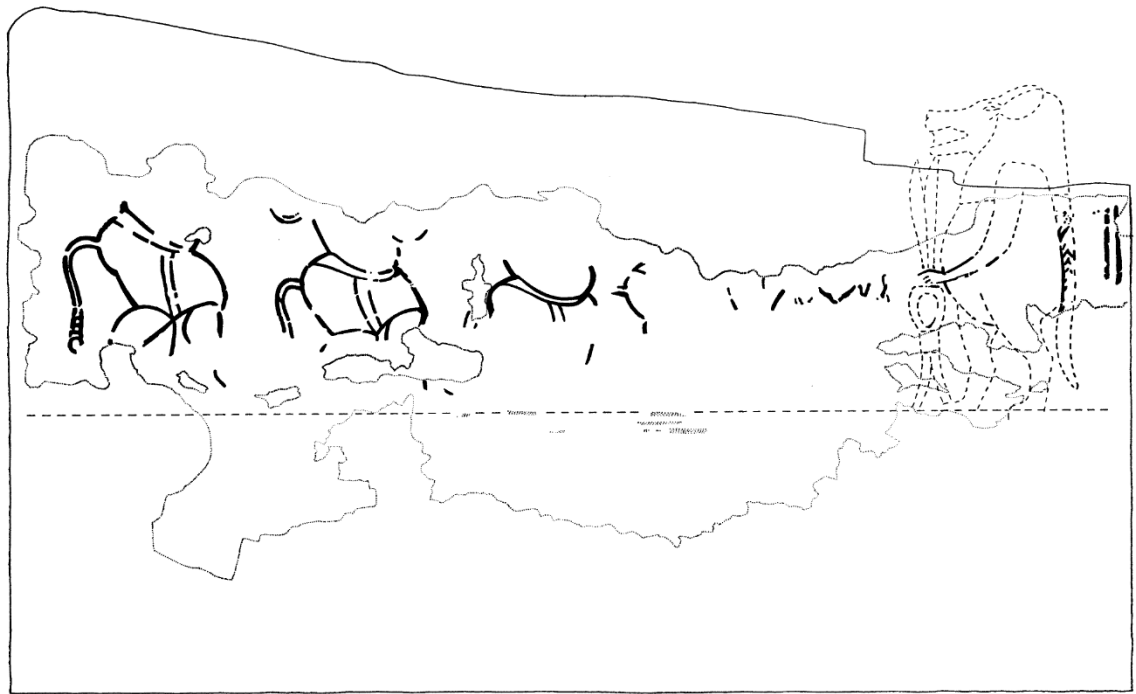


Figure 309 – Wall painting from Amarna, Main Street House 3. Image from Kemp, “Wall Paintings,” fig. 1.

Several parallels exist for these representations, namely in beds decorated with Bes, one Amarna bed model, and possibly an unprovenanced woman-on-bed figurine.³⁵⁸¹ Taking up the bulk of the northern wall of the front room of Amarna Main Street House 3, several dancing Bes

³⁵⁷⁹ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 305.

³⁵⁸⁰ Kleinke, *Female spaces*, 19.

³⁵⁸¹ See above, §§ 2.2.2, figs. 18-20; 3.3, Table 15, fig. 158.

figures wearing kilts stand before a figure to the right, whose pregnant belly and crocodile spine indicate it was Taweret.³⁵⁸²

7.5.2.2 Possible Nursing Scene

The depiction (Figure 310) occurs in association with the box bed in house S.E. I.³⁵⁸³ Only the feet of the scene are preserved, showing a seated figure attended by three other persons, one of whom has black skin. Flanking the figures are convolvulus vines and the remains of two columns. While Bruyère reconstructs the scene with the central figure as Hathor wearing cow horns and solar disk,³⁵⁸⁴ it does not seem as likely. Instead, the scene more likely depicted a regular woman attended by other women, in parallel to the Wochenlaube ostraca illustrations.³⁵⁸⁵ In addition, the leafy bottom of the columns indicate that the tops were floral, likely lotuses like in some of the Wochenlaube. As discussed above, these columns may be related in the depiction of the birth pavilion discussed in contemporary medical/magical spells. While Meskell considered the stool on which the central woman sits a birthing stool,³⁵⁸⁶ such a stool is not limited to Wochenlaube scenes.³⁵⁸⁷

³⁵⁸² Kemp, "Wall Paintings," 47-48, fig. 1.

³⁵⁸³ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, pl. X.

³⁵⁸⁴ B. Bruyère, "Un fragment de fresque," 121-133, fig. 5.

³⁵⁸⁵ Brunner-Traut, "Wochenlaube," fig. 5.

³⁵⁸⁶ Meskell, *Archaeologies of Social Life*, 100.

³⁵⁸⁷ See above, § 7.2.3.

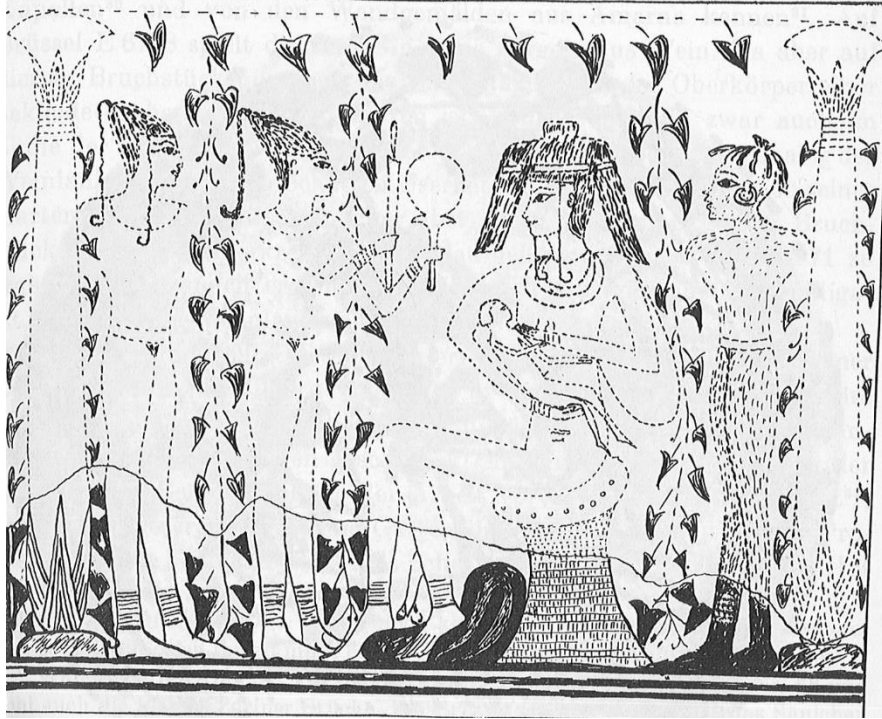


Figure 310 – Reconstruction of scene from lit clos S.E. I. Image from Brunner-Traut, “Wochenlaube,” Abb. 5.

7.5.2.3 Female Dancer

The scene with a female dancer occurs in house S.E. VIII in association with the box bed (Figure 311). The woman has tattoos of Bes on both her thighs and is flanked by convolvulus. A Leiden New Kingdom faience bowl (Figure 312) likewise bears on the right thigh a similar Bes tattoo to the ones on the S.E. VIII female, the former bearing erotic imagery to revitalize the deceased.³⁵⁸⁸ Most notably, several woman-on-bed figurines from Lahun, Sedment, Mirgissa, and Thebes also had Bes tattoos,³⁵⁸⁹ which would indicate a fertility role. The idea of birth-deity tattoos occurred earlier in the Middle Kingdom, with some paddle dolls having images of Ipet.³⁵⁹⁰

³⁵⁸⁸ R. Bianchi, “Bowl,” in *Gifts of the Nile: Ancient Egyptian Faience*, ed. F. Friedman et al. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 212, Cat. 79.

³⁵⁸⁹ See above, § 3.2.6, 172, n. 1005.

³⁵⁹⁰ See above, § 3.2.1.1, 128-9, nn. 754-5, fig. 101.

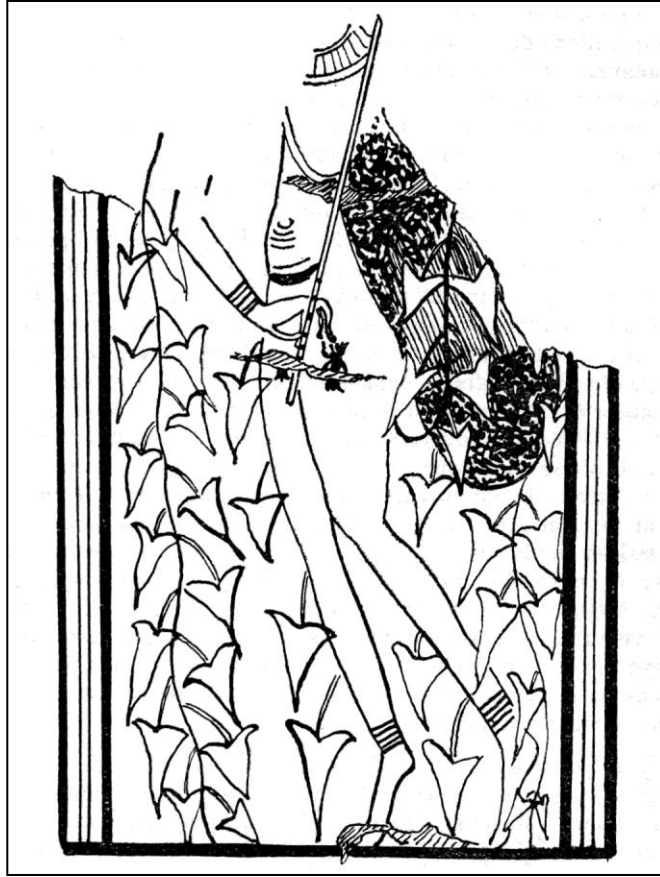


Figure 311 – Wall painting from Deir el-Medina, House S.E. VIII. Image from Vandier, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne* IV, fig. 249.

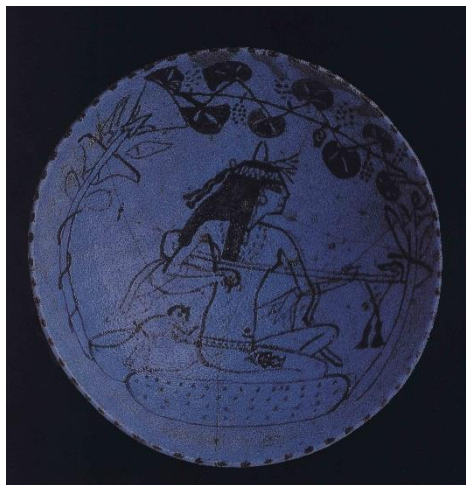


Figure 312 – Bowl, Leiden AD 14. Image from Bianchi, "Bowl," 213.

7.5.2.4 Papyrus Boat Scene

In house N.O. XII, the painted decoration in association with the box bed depicts the lower remains of a marsh scene, with the foot of a person on a reed boat (Figure 313-4). To the right and left of the boat are papyrus reeds, while the lower section of the boat shows a lotus flower. While Bruyère considered the person on the boat as a young Horus,³⁵⁹¹ that does not appear likely in a house context. Instead, Meskell identified the person as possible a woman or girl.³⁵⁹²

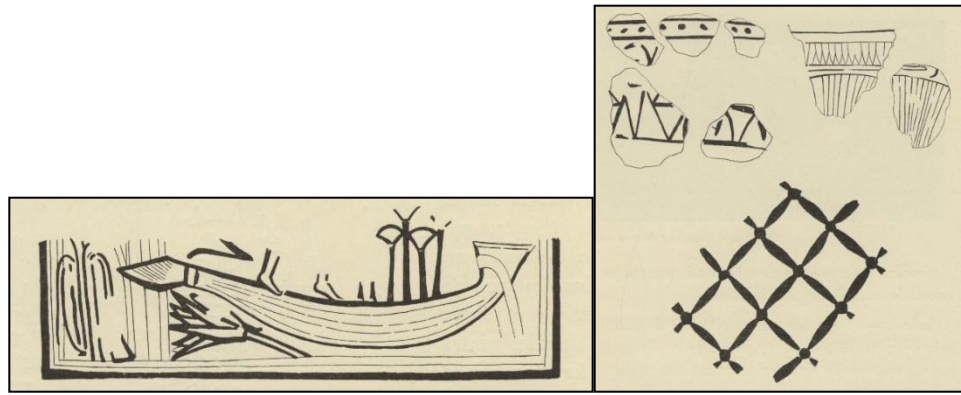


Figure 313 (left) – Decoration from lit clos in House N.O. XII. Image from Bruyère, *Rapport 16*, fig. 157.
Figure 314 (right) – Fragments of decoration from lit clos in House N.O. XII. Image from Bruyère, *Rapport 16*, fig. 158.

Parallels for the scene include faience bowls from the New Kingdom (Figure 315), which depicted similar women riding reed boats in marsh environments, using a pole to steer the boat.³⁵⁹³ While several bowls were used within temple or shrine contexts as offerings to Hathor,³⁵⁹⁴ others were discovered in Deir el-Medina within funerary contexts.³⁵⁹⁵ Similar scenes of rowers on papyrus boats occur in several Deir el-Medina ostraca.³⁵⁹⁶ Interestingly, there are

³⁵⁹¹ Bruyère, *Rapport 16*, 286.

³⁵⁹² Meskell, *Archaeologies of Social Life*, 102.

³⁵⁹³ Meskell, *Archaeologies of Social Life*, 102.

³⁵⁹⁴ F. Friedman, “Bowl with pool and lotus motifs,” in *Gifts of the Nile*, ed. F. Friedman (London, 1998), 211.

³⁵⁹⁵ Bianchi, “Bowl,” 212.

³⁵⁹⁶ Vandier d’Abbadie, *Catalogue II*, pl. LXXXVIII.2666-7; *Ibid.*, *Catalogue IV*, pl. CXVI.3019.

parallel scenes on mold-made bed models dating from the Ramesside through Third Intermediate Period.³⁵⁹⁷ Within this context, the woman on reed boat appears to have invoked female fertility, which is consistent with the use of the faience bowls as offerings to Hathor.



Figure 315 – Faience bowls from Gurob. Image from Petrie, *IKG*, pls. XX.3 and 6.

7.5.2.5 Scene with Women

The scene is associated with the box bed in house C. VII (Figure 316).³⁵⁹⁸ From the left, a woman kneels on a platform before a raised smaller female figure, with a box-shaped object, possibly a chair, between them. A scene similarly depicting women, who could be dancers, came from one of the paintings from Amarna Main House 3 (Figure 317).³⁵⁹⁹ The scenes are perhaps akin to the depiction of female servants on some of the Wochenlaube ostraca.³⁶⁰⁰ In addition,

³⁵⁹⁷ See Chapter 3 above.

³⁵⁹⁸ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16 fig. 182.

³⁵⁹⁹ Kemp, “Wall paintings,” 50, fig. 2.

³⁶⁰⁰ Ex: § 7.4.1, figs. 300 and 302.

these depictions represented a continuation of the presence of dancers in association with fertility themes, as seen in Middle Kingdom Type A figurines and the birth tale in Papyrus Westcar.³⁶⁰¹

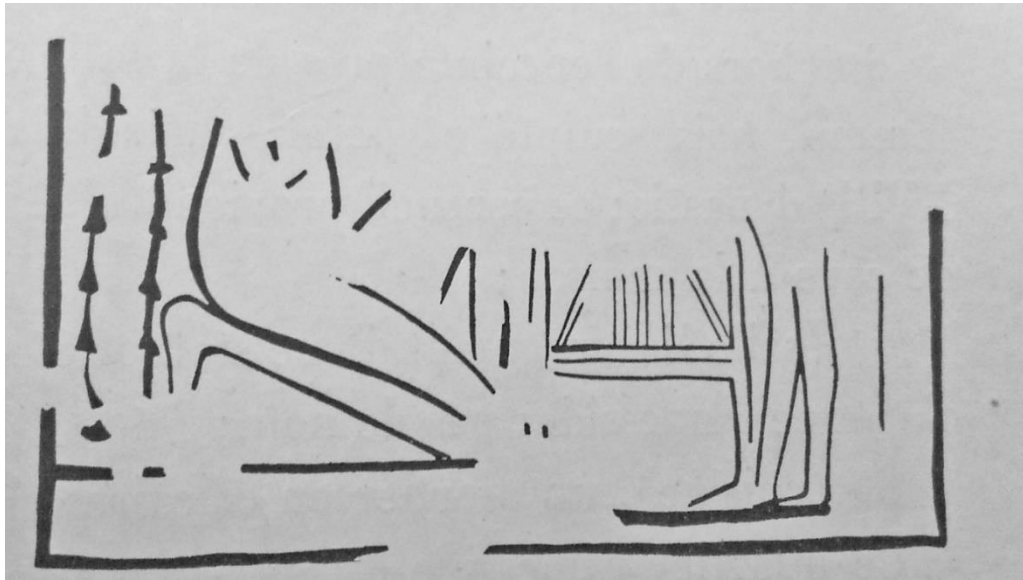


Figure 316 – Decoration from lit clos in House C. VII. Image from Bruyere, *Rapport 16*, fig. 182.



Figure 317 – Wall painting from Amarna, Long Wall Street House 10. Image from Kemp “Wall paintings,” fig. 2.

³⁶⁰¹ See above, §§ 3.2.1 and 5.4, respectively.

7.5.3 Theories

Much scholarly research has been devoted to the identification of the *lit clos*. Theories had ranged from sleeping beds, women's spaces, and multifunctional features. However, the usage most consistent with the iconography and context of the structures is as household altars.

Due to the imagery of Bes common on certain of the Deir el-Medina structures,³⁶⁰² Meskell and Romano had considered them sleeping spaces.³⁶⁰³ While the theory is consistent with the evidence of Egyptians considering Bes as protective of sleepers,³⁶⁰⁴ these structures are not consistent with the known sleeping benches placed in the rear of the house.³⁶⁰⁵ In those, the benches would have supported wooden beds, with square stones at the legs to stop the bed from sinking.³⁶⁰⁶ This feature, however, did not occur with the Deir el-Medina front room structures.³⁶⁰⁷ Likewise, the placement of sleeping quarters at the front room is problematic, given that front rooms appeared to have been a more public space within the house.³⁶⁰⁸ Indeed, evidence from Lahun, Amarna, and Tell el-Dab'a indicate no traces of sleeping benches within the front room.³⁶⁰⁹

Related to this first theory, some scholars considered the *lit clos* as a birthing bed, based on the iconography.³⁶¹⁰ However, as Koltsida and Ritner noted,³⁶¹¹ it would have been difficult

³⁶⁰² See above, § 7.5.2.1.

³⁶⁰³ Meskell, *Archaeologies of Social Life*, 100; D.F. Romano, *Daily Life of the Ancient Egyptians* (Pittsburgh: Carnegie Museum of Natural History, 1990), 27.

³⁶⁰⁴ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, 75.

³⁶⁰⁵ Friedman, "Aspects of domestic life and religion," 98; Koltsida, "Birth-bed," 165.

³⁶⁰⁶ F. Arnold, "A Study of Egyptian Domestic Buildings," *VA* 5.2-3 (1989): 83.

³⁶⁰⁷ Kleinke, *Female spaces*, 30.

³⁶⁰⁸ Koltsida, "Birth-bed," 169; H. Rieke, *Der Grundriß des Amarna-Wohnhauses, Neudruck der Ausgabe 1932* (Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 4; Otto Zeller: Osnabrück, 1967), 16.

³⁶⁰⁹ Kleinke, *Female spaces*, 30.

³⁶¹⁰ K.A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant. The Life and Times of Ramesses II, King of Egypt* (Warminster, 1982), 187; B. Lesko, "Household and domestic religion," 205; N. Strudwick and H. Strudwick, *Thebes in Egypt. A Guide to the Tombs and Temples of Ancient Luxor* (London: British Museum Press, 1999), 178.

³⁶¹¹ Ritner, "Household religion," 177; Koltsida, "Birth-bed," 17.

for a woman to birth in such a small, confined space. Likewise, Romano had contended that it would be improbable that 10% of the available frontal floor space would have functioned as a birth area, given that such births likely only occurred around once a year.³⁶¹² In addition, as discussed above, records of a “woman’s bed” from Deir el-Medina were of wood, not brick.³⁶¹³ While some scholars had considered the structures as possibly where the woman spent post-birth isolation,³⁶¹⁴ Friedman had noted that the houses would be too hot to comfortably sit in during high daytime temperatures.³⁶¹⁵ Indeed, most of the houses in Deir el-Medina didn’t have such a structure. In addition, the front room in Deir el-Medina houses functioned as a transitional area between outer public and inner private space,³⁶¹⁶ making it wholly inappropriate for an isolation area.

Based on the depictions of Bes, Meskell had considered the *lit clos* as a designated female space within the house.³⁶¹⁷ However her theory was based on the early excavations of the site, where Bruyère was vague on the exact origins of archaeological deposits. Modern excavations from Amarna indicate that the houses in the Workmen’s Village did not have a female division, as female items, such as weaving materials, occurred in all areas of the house.³⁶¹⁸

Since House S.O. I in Deir el-Medina had evidence of both an elevated structure and animal activity within the same frontal area,³⁶¹⁹ Hobson had theorized that the former was a place

³⁶¹² Romano, *Daily life*, 26-7.

³⁶¹³ Ritner, “Household religion,” 180. See also above, §2.5, pages 130-1, nn. 856-863 and pages 133-4, nn. 878-890.

³⁶¹⁴ Kemp, “Wall paintings,” 53; Friedman, “Aspects of domestic life,” 102; B. Lesko, “Household and domestic religion,” 205.

³⁶¹⁵ Friedman, “Aspects of domestic life,” 117.

³⁶¹⁶ Koltsida, *Female spaces*, 16.

³⁶¹⁷ Meskell, *Archaeologies of Social Life*, 100; Ibid., *Private Life in Ancient Egypt*, 111, 125.

³⁶¹⁸ Koltsida, *Female spaces*, 19.

³⁶¹⁹ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 313.

to sit and oversee the household animals away from animal feces.³⁶²⁰ This theory, however, ignores the iconography of the structures and the associated material remains.

Friedman had considered the *lit clos* as a multifunctional structure, in order to compensate for the general lack of space in the Deir el-Medina houses.³⁶²¹ Specifically, she and some other scholars considered them as beds to protect the new mother and child and as altars for aiding fertility and worship of ancestors.³⁶²² However, the theory encounters the same issues surrounding the use of the structures as beds discussed above. Likewise, switching use of the space from a bed to an altar would encounter issues of contamination of a sacred space.

The best supported and most commonly accepted theory considered the *lit clos* as a household altar.³⁶²³ Dieter Arnold noted that the stepped design reflected a cult altar,³⁶²⁴ with the T-shape also seen in temples, tomb chapels, basins, and offering tables from Amarna.³⁶²⁵ The similar iconography of the Deir el-Medina and Amarna structures likely held the same meaning.³⁶²⁶ While the former were larger and generally more enclosed,³⁶²⁷ the features from Amarna houses J49.1, M50.1 and O49.9 were close to the same size as the Deir el-Medina features and similarly placed in a separate room. While most of the Amarna household altars had no decoration, with a few examples with white plaster,³⁶²⁸ such decoration may have simply not been preserved.³⁶²⁹ These spaces would likely have been devoted to ancestor worship and

³⁶²⁰ C. Hobson, *The World of the Pharaohs* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 117; Ibid., *Exploring the World of the Pharaohs. A Complete Guide to Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 117.

³⁶²¹ Friedman, "Aspects of domestic life," 111.

³⁶²² Friedman, "Aspects of domestic life," 117; Strudwick and Strudwick, *Thebes in Egypt*, 178.

³⁶²³ Koltsida, "Birth-bed," 165.

³⁶²⁴ Di. Arnold, *Lexikon der ägyptischen Baukunst* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 2000), 100.

³⁶²⁵ B. Kemp, "Preliminary report on the el-'Amarna expedition 1979," *JEA* 66 (1980): 5-16; Valbelle, *Les Ouvriers*, 261-2; A. H. Bomann, *The Private Chapel in Ancient Egypt* (London: Keegan Paul International, 1991), 101-7; Stevens, *Private religion*, 234.

³⁶²⁶ Kemp, "Wall paintings," 53.

³⁶²⁷ Stevens, *Private religion*, Table II.13.10, 234.

³⁶²⁸ Ex: Borchardt and Ricke, *Wohnhäuser*, 103 (Hausplan 29), 134 (Hausplan 33), 281 (Hausplan 93).

³⁶²⁹ Stevens, *Private religion*, 234.

fertility.³⁶³⁰ Indeed, House C. VI in Deir el-Medina had three niches within the front room that accommodated ancestral busts.³⁶³¹ Worship of household ancestors has considerable evidence during this period.³⁶³² The fertility function was also clear, with deities such as Bes, Hathor, and Taweret the focus of worship.³⁶³³ For example, the front room of Deir el-Medina house S.O. VI had cupboard where excavators found a stela depicting Taweret in the upper register and Hathor within the lower register.³⁶³⁴

7.6 Conclusion

The imagery associated with childbirth itself contained a mixture of continuity and changes built upon previous concepts. For example, the use of birth bricks continued well after the Middle Kingdom Abydos birth brick and rod segments. Likewise, the association between the bedroom and birth and fertility magic present in Middle Kingdom objects became more pronounced in the fertility iconography of the New Kingdom.

This New Kingdom birth-bed imagery had certain motifs. As we have seen above, deities Aha/Bes, Ipet/Taweret, and Renenutet also occurred earlier, especially on apotropaia and bedroom objects.³⁶³⁵ The representation of kohl jars is notable given the early New Kingdom kohl jars with apotropaic figures. These jars thus appear associated with the bedroom and birth-related imagery. Other motifs, however, held different associations. The representation of the

³⁶³⁰ M. Bierbrier, *The Tomb-Builders of the Pharaohs* (Cairo: American University in Cairo, 1982), 69; A.R. David, *The Pyramid Builders of Ancient Egypt. A Modern Investigation of Pharaoh's Workforce* (London: Routledge, 1986), 66; Robins, "Women and Children in Peril," 31.

³⁶³¹ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 308.

³⁶³² R. Demarée, *The ʿh-iKr-n-Rʿ-Stelae – On Ancestor Worship in Ancient Egypt* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabijge Ossten, 1983); Friedman, "On the meaning of some anthropoid busts from Deir el-Medina," *JEA* 71 (1985): 82-97; Sadek, *Popular Religion*, 77-8; Friedman, "Aspects of Domestic Life and Religion," 95-117.

³⁶³³ G. Pinch, "Private Life in Ancient Egypt," in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, v. 1, ed. J.M. Sasson (New York: Scribner's, 1995), 367; McDowell, *Village Life in Ancient Egypt*, 11; Robins, *Women in ancient Egypt*, 75.

³⁶³⁴ Bruyère, *Rapport* 16, 334.

³⁶³⁵ See above, §§ 2.2.1, 2.5.1, 6.2.12, and 6.2.16.1.

child occurred in nude female figurines from the Middle through New Kingdoms, as well as the birth brick and royal birth scenes. Likewise, the connection of mirrors with fertility material also occurred in Middle Kingdom tombs with Type A nude figurines and on some woman-on-bed figurines. Certain features, namely the convolvulus vine and papyrus boat, appear to have been new to the New Kingdom.

As we will discuss below, the relationship between objects associated with human fertility and the birth material discussed above appears to have been more complicated. Dwarf figurines of the Middle Kingdom holding serpent wands appear related to the contemporary use of such wands as seen in deities on the apotropaia.³⁶³⁶ Similarly, the mold-made female figurines of the New Kingdom appear connected with the New Kingdom birth-bed iconography. Vessels of pregnant women and femiform jars seemed to have reflected the larger New Kingdom role of Taweret and the representation of women and children. However, dwarves and women did not appear as motifs in apotropaia. Likewise, handmade female figurines appeared less connected to the more official birth iconographies of the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom.

³⁶³⁶ See above, § 3.5.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

Examination of the material above has revealed a rich tradition surrounding fertility and birth. However, do the developments of this tradition correlate with wider religious changes? One possible framework for examining the issue is through the concepts of piety and decorum. The former refers to the connection of individuals and deities and their expression in textual and archaeological material. Among the variables which could affect the extent of explicit associations between deities and people of various statuses is decorum, the social and moral mores surrounding the appropriate usage of certain religious material, symbols, and motifs. For example, a funerary depiction of a king with a deity may not be similarly proper for a non-elite person in a domestic context. Another proposal involves viewing changes through the lens of continuity, discontinuity, and the development of previous themes. The current evidence suggests that both these frameworks explain the trends seen in our material.

8.2 Piety and Decorum Framework

The written records of the Ramesside period contained a number of examples with a confessional and strongly individual character, especially stelae from Deir el-Medina, which lead early scholars to posit that those dynasties represented an “Age of Personal Piety.”³⁶³⁷ Gerhard Fecht noted similar features in contemporary hymns and prayers from the Late Egyptian miscellanies.³⁶³⁸ Much of the initial research on this phenomenon focused on these textual sources.³⁶³⁹ More recently, scholarship had noted other sources implying a private person’s

³⁶³⁷ J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1912), 349; B. Gunn, “The religion of the poor in ancient Egypt,” *JEA* 3 (1916): 81-94.

³⁶³⁸ G. Fecht, *Literarische Zeugnisse zur "personlichen Frömmigkeit" in Ägypten: Analyse der Beispiele in den ramessidischen Schulpapyri* (AHAW Jahrgang 1965: I; Heidelberg, 1965).

³⁶³⁹ E. Otto, *Gott und Mensch nach den ägyptischen Tempelinschriften der griechisch-römischen Zeit* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1964); H. Brunner, “Persönliche Frömmigkeit,” *LÄ* 4 (1982): col. 951-963; J.

connection to a deity, namely letters,³⁶⁴⁰ dream books,³⁶⁴¹ votives,³⁶⁴² and domestic archaeological finds.³⁶⁴³

Jan Assmann had asserted that such texts, particularly letters and prayers, constituted the prime evidence for “personal piety.”³⁶⁴⁴ Under this theory, piety was a New Kingdom invention, developed in response to a lack of access to the divine during the Amarna period.³⁶⁴⁵ Personal piety in this sense represented a “theology of will,”³⁶⁴⁶ wherein deities maintained a closeness with people and intervened actively and willingly in everyday life.³⁶⁴⁷ Choosing to adopt the same definition of piety, Bussmann considered wider definitions “closer to notions of religious practice, folk culture, or domestic religion” that “focus more on practices and beliefs that do not

Assmann, *Ägypten: Eine Sinngeschichte* (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1996), 259; Ibid., ‘Gottesbeherzigung “Persönliche Frömmigkeit” als religiöse Strömung der Ramessidenzeit,’ in *L’Impero Ramesside: Convegno Internazionale in onore di Sergio Donadoni*, Vicino Oriente, Quaderni 1, ed. I. Brancoli (Rome: University of Rome, La Sapienza, 1997), 17-43; S. Bickel, “Aspects et fonctions de la déification d’Amenhotep III,” *BIFAO* 102 (2002): 63-90.

³⁶⁴⁰ D. Sweeney, “Intercessory prayer in ancient Egypt and the Bible,” in *Pharaonic Egypt: The Bible and Christianity*, ed. Sarah Israelit-Groll (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1985), 213-230; Ibid., “Henuttawy’s guilty conscience (gods and grain in Late Ramesside Letter no. 37),” *JEA* 80 (1994): 208-212; J. Baines, “Egyptian letters of the New Kingdom as evidence for religious practice,” *JANER* 1 (2002): 1-31; S. Bickel, “Ich spreche ständig zu Aton...”: Zur Gott-Mensch-Beziehung in der Amarna Religion,” *JANER* 3 (2003): 23-45.

³⁶⁴¹ K. Szpakowska, *Behind closed eyes: Dreams and nightmares in ancient Egypt* (London: Classical Press of Wales, 2003), 123-151.

³⁶⁴² Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*.

³⁶⁴³ Bomann, *Private chapel*; B. Kemp, “How religious were the ancient Egyptians?” *CAJ* 5/1 (1995): 25-54; Stevens, *Private religion*.

³⁶⁴⁴ Assmann, *Ägypten: Eine Sinngeschichte*, 259-77, esp. 259; R. Bussmann, “Personal piety: an archaeological response,” in *Company of images: modelling the imaginary world of Middle Kingdom Egypt (2000-1500 BC); proceedings of the international conference of the EPOCHS Project held 18th-20th September 2014 at UCL, London*, ed. G. Miniaci et al. (OLA 262; Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 71-91.

³⁶⁴⁵ Brunner, “Persönliche Frömmigkeit,” 951; J. Assmann, *Ägypten: Theologie und Frömmigkeit einer frühen Hochkultur* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1984), 258-282; Ibid., *Sinngeschichte*, 259, 260-1; Ibid., “Gottesbeherzigung”; Ibid., “Theological responses to Amarna,” in *Egypt, Israel, and the ancient Mediterranean world: Studies in honor of Donald B. Redford*, ed. G. Knoppers, and A. Hirsch (PdÄ 20; Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 179-91; Bickel, “Aspects et fonctions,” 66.

³⁶⁴⁶ J. Assmann, *Ma’at: Gerechtigkeit und Unsterblichkeit im alten Ägypten*. (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1990), 252.

³⁶⁴⁷ H. Brunner, “Gottesnähe und -ferne,” *LÄ* 2 (1977): col. 817-819; Assmann, *Theologie und Frömmigkeit*, 9-21, 25-6; Ibid., “Geheimnis, Gedächtnis und Gottesnähe: zum Strukturwandel der Grabsemantik und der Diesseits-Jenseitsbeziehungen im Neuen Reich,” in *Thebanische Beamtennekropolen: neue Perspektiven archäologischer Forschung*, ed. Jan Assmann et al. (SAGA 12; Heidelberg: Heidelberg Orientverlag, 1995), 282-293.

change over time, or at least look as if they did not, thus downplaying the novel character of personal piety.”³⁶⁴⁸

Other scholarship has challenged the use of nonliterary texts as the main source for investigating piety, viewing Assmann’s definition of the term as overly narrow.³⁶⁴⁹ Kemp considered the expressions of piety in these sources as associated with temples and therefore virtually imposed by the state.³⁶⁵⁰ Baines noted that the written materials were restricted to elites via decorum.³⁶⁵¹ Kessler and Adrom had remarked that the texts represented a long-standing tradition of praying and petitioning to a deity for oneself and/or family members.³⁶⁵²

Baines and Frood considered the Ramesside material as part of broader trends, with the expression of piety subject to decorum.³⁶⁵³ Given the elite nature of textual sources, Baines had used the term “practical religion” to widen the range of materials to include private person’s everyday religious beliefs.³⁶⁵⁴ Pinch instead used the terms “personal religion,” popular religion,” and “folk religion,” the former meaning individual practices centered on one or more deities from the state cult, the second referring to religious beliefs and practices of ordinary people in daily-

³⁶⁴⁸ Bussmann, “Personal Piety,” 72-73.

³⁶⁴⁹ J. Baines, “Practical religion and piety,” *JEA* 73 (1987): 82, 96-7; R. de Souza Lemos. “Archaeology, religion, ritual and Ancient Egypt: some discussions on the Amarna period (c. 1350-1330 BC),” *Hathor - Studies of Egyptology* 1 (2012): 94-5.

³⁶⁵⁰ Kemp, “How religious,” 29-32.

³⁶⁵¹ Baines, “Practical religion and piety,” 79-98; Ibid., “Restricted knowledge, hierarchy, and decorum: Modern perceptions and ancient institutions,” *JARCE* 27 (1990): 1-24; Ibid., “Society, morality, and religious practice,” in *Religion in ancient Egypt: Gods, myths, and personal practice*, ed. Byron Shafer (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 123-200.

³⁶⁵² D. Kessler, “Dissidentenliteratur oder kultischer Hintergrund? Teil 1: Überlegungen zum Tura-Hymnus und zum Hymnus in TT 139,” *SAK* 25 (1998): 161-188; F. Adrom, “Gipfel der Frömmigkeit. (Soziale und funktionale Überlegungen zu Kultstelen am Beispiel der Stele Turin CG 50058 des Nfr-abw),” *SAK* 33 (2005): 1-28.

³⁶⁵³ Baines, *Fecundity Figures*, 277-305; Ibid., “The Stela of Emhab: Innovation, Tradition, Hierarchy,” *JEA* 72 (1986): 41-53; Ibid., “The Stela of Khusobek: Private and Royal Narrative and Values,” in *Form und Mass, Beiträge zur Literatur, Sprache und Kunst des alten Ägypten*, ed. G. Fecht et al. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1987), 43-61; J. Baines and E. Frood, “Piety, Change, and Display in the New Kingdom,” in *Ramesside studies in honor of K. A. Kitchen*, ed. M. Collier and S. Snape (Rutherford Press Limited, 2011), 2.

³⁶⁵⁴ Baines, “Practical religion and piety,” 82, 96-7; Baines and Frood, “Piety, Change, and Display,” 5.

life, and the latter those beliefs and practices independent of the state.³⁶⁵⁵ Other scholars had used popular religion, particularly to distinguish religious acts versus everyday conduct.³⁶⁵⁶ Under these wider definitions, scholarship has expanded the chronology of personal piety/religious practice back to at least the First Intermediate Period.³⁶⁵⁷

8.2.1 Birth and Fertility with Piety/Decorum Framework

Previous scholarship has generally subsumed birth and fertility practices under discussions of domestic religion and votive practices. However, a more comprehensive view indicates a more complicated picture. Decorum restrictions on expressions of piety can occur along class, gender, and age lines as well as the type of site. In the case of the fertility/birth material, the main difference between the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom was the archaeological contexts of objects. Furthermore, while decorum rules generally shifted to allow more explicit associations between people and deities, some of the birth material exhibited a closer access to the divine from at least the Middle Kingdom.

Medical-magical texts pertaining to birth and fertility from the Middle Kingdom on invoked various deities, either directly or through intermediaries or the use of ingredients with divine associations, particularly connecting the mother with Isis and Hathor and the child with

³⁶⁵⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 325.

³⁶⁵⁶ A. I. Sadek, "Glimpses of popular religion in New Kingdom Egypt I: Mourning for Amenophis I at Deir el-Medina," *GM* 36 (1979): 51-56; *Ibid.*, *Popular religion*; A. Stevens, "The material evidence for domestic religion at Amarna and preliminary remarks on its interpretation," *JEA* 89 (2003): 143-168; Stevens, *Private religion*, 21.

³⁶⁵⁷ P. Vernus, "Études de philologie et de linguistique (II)," *RdÉ* 34 (1983): 115-128; Kemp, "How religious," 25-54; E. Blumenthal, "Sinuhes persönliche Frömmigkeit," in *Jerusalem Studies in Egyptology*, ed. I. Shirun-Grumach (ÄAT 40; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1998), 213-231; Kessler, "Dissidentenliteratur," 161-188; B. Backes, "Piété personnelle au Moyen Empire? À propos de la stèle de Nebpou (Ny Carlsberg AEIN 1540)," *BSEG* 24 (2001): 5-9; M. Luiselli, 'Religion und Literatur: Überlegungen zur Funktion der "persönlichen Frömmigkeit" in der Literatur des Mittleren und Neuen Reiches,' *SAK* 36 (2007): 157-182; *Ibid.*, *Die Suche nach Gottesnähe: Die persönliche Teilnahme an der Religion in Ägypten von der 1. Zwischenzeit bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches* (ÄAT 73; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2011).

Horus and the newborn sun god.³⁶⁵⁸ While there is one mention of a lector priest, other written and iconographic sources suggest a wider audience had access to magical spells, including nurses and even the patient him/herself.³⁶⁵⁹ As discussed above,³⁶⁶⁰ the Abydos birth brick depicted women with the same turquoise-blue hair-color associated with Hathor both on the standards depicted on the same brick and in texts. In contrast, the autobiographies of the Middle Kingdom are more limited, with some attributing career achievements to divine will.³⁶⁶¹ Likewise, letters from the Middle Kingdom on reflected an indirect method, with a higher ranked person or priest making an appeal for another person.³⁶⁶²

Such an indirect approach also occurred in the Letters to the Dead requesting a child, most of which had female dedicatees. Further evidence indicates that women authored Letters to the Dead concerning other matters as well.³⁶⁶³ The 18th Dynasty block statue BM 41645³⁶⁶⁴ likewise represented a long-standing religious practice. Given that decorum allowed only the priesthood to see the cult image,³⁶⁶⁵ intermediary statues provided an indirect and more explicit link between individuals and deities.³⁶⁶⁶ Two 12th Dynasty scribal statues of vizier Mentuhotep from Karnak, posed like known intermediary statues and with 19th Dynasty replacement heads,

³⁶⁵⁸ § 5.2.4.

³⁶⁵⁹ § 5.2.3.

³⁶⁶⁰ See § 7.2.1, pp. 528, nn. 3356-9.

³⁶⁶¹ W. C. Hayes, "Horemkhauf of Nekhen and his Trip to It-tow," *JEA* 33 (1947): 3-11; J. Vandier, *Mo'alla, La tombe d'Ankhtifi et la tombe de Sébekhotep* (BdÉ 18; Cairo: IFAO, 1950), 163ff.; W. Schenkel, *Memphis, Herakleopolis, Theben* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965), 45-57, 263-4, 267-8; Luiselli, *Die Suche nach Gottesnähe*, 220-7.

³⁶⁶² J. Černý, *Late Ramesside Letters* (BAe 9; Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique de la Reine Élisabeth 1939), 12, 8-13; 29, 16-30,5; E. Wente, *Late Ramesside Letters* (SAOC 33; Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1967), nos. 14, 31; Ibid, *Letters of Ancient Egypt*, 201, nos. 94, 97-103; Baines, "Egyptian Letters of the New Kingdom," 5-6; Luiselli, *Die Suche nach Gottesnähe*, 189; C. Eyre, "Women and prayer in pharaonic Egypt," in *Decorum and experience: essays in ancient culture for John Baines*, ed. E. Frood and A. McDonald (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 2013), 113.

³⁶⁶³ Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, no. 347, cf. 340 and 348; Eyre, "Women and," 111.

³⁶⁶⁴ § 5.3, pp. 377-8, nn. 2296-7.

³⁶⁶⁵ G. Robins, "Cult Statues in Ancient Egypt," in *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East*, ed. N. H. Walls (Boston: ASOR, 2005), 1-12.

³⁶⁶⁶ E. Frood, "Temple lives: devotion, piety, and the divine," in *Egypt: the Egyptian collections of Leiden and Bologna*, ed. Daniela Picchi (Leiden: SKIRA, 2015), 318.

likely were precedents for the New Kingdom statues.³⁶⁶⁷ They become more prevalent in the New Kingdom with the massive investment of royal temple-building.³⁶⁶⁸ In this period, the statues portrayed elites as mediators for prayers to deities like Amun,³⁶⁶⁹ a theme that continued in Ramesside block statues.³⁶⁷⁰ Like our example, a number of these statues addressed women and girls with concerns such as finding a husband or having a good child.³⁶⁷¹

Non-elite individuals likewise appeared to have had access to a range of fertility/birth material. During the Middle Kingdom, objects from elite contexts had their counterparts in lower status areas. For nude figurines, Type A belonged to elite tombs as opposed to the more widespread Type B and plaque figurines.³⁶⁷² Similar to the former, the goddesses disguised as dancers in Papyrus Westcar aided an elite woman. Contemporary dwarf figures followed the same trend as the female figurines, with the Lahun dwarf stands serving as domestic versions of the funerary dwarf figurines.³⁶⁷³ Aha/Bes, Ipet/Taweret, and Heqet likewise occurred in domestic as well as funerary contexts.³⁶⁷⁴ The apotropaic imagery which occurred on the wands and animal figurines in elite tombs also appeared on the domestic Abydos birth brick along with wooden posts decorated with the image of Hathor. In contrast to acacia-seed beads and cowrie imitations in semi-precious stones, natural cowries consistently occurred in association with non-elite women.³⁶⁷⁵

³⁶⁶⁷ S. Sauneron, "Les deux statues de Mentuhotep," in *Karnak V* (1970-1972): 65-72; Baines, "Practical religion and piety," 90-1.

³⁶⁶⁸ Frood, "Temple lives," 317.

³⁶⁶⁹ Ex: L. Kákosy, "Heilstatuen in Tempeln," in *3. Ägyptologische Tempeltagung, Hamburg, 1.-5. Juni 1994: Systeme und Programme der ägyptischen Tempeldekoration*, ed. D. Kurth (ÄAT 33.1; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1995), 91-98.

³⁶⁷⁰ Ex: J. J. Clère, "Deux statues gardiennes de porte d'Époque Ramesside," *JEA* 54 (1968): 135-148; V. Rondot, "De la fonction des statues-cubes comme cale-porte," *RdÉ* 62 (2011): 141-157.

³⁶⁷¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 333-7, 342-3; Frood, "Temple lives," 318.

³⁶⁷² § 3.2.1.3; § 3.2.2, p. 162; § 3.2.8, p. 178, n. 1035.

³⁶⁷³ § 3.1.1.

³⁶⁷⁴ §§ 2.2.1, 2.4.1, and 2.5.1.

³⁶⁷⁵ § 4.2.1; § 4.2.2, Table 22; § 4.2.3, pp. 249-52.

The New Kingdom birth material consisted of standardized forms made from regional and temple workshops. These objects included amulets and figurines of birth deities,³⁶⁷⁶ Types C-F figurines,³⁶⁷⁷ birth beds, and bed models. Notably, during this period, the iconography represented women more explicitly in relation to deities, such as Type C figurines,³⁶⁷⁸ the presence of Bes-tattoos on some Type F figurines,³⁶⁷⁹ certain bed models,³⁶⁸⁰ the royal birth scenes, Wochenlaube ostraca of women on Bes-beds, and *lit clos*-altars.³⁶⁸¹ Similarly, privately owned objects depicting Hathor occurred more frequently during this time.

A difficulty with assessing gender and age differentiation is the Middle Kingdom tendency for group burials.³⁶⁸² Overall, while many of the objects had a feminine emphasis, birth and fertility practices were not exclusive to women. Female-oriented materials included cowries, amuletic cowrie imitations, acacia-seed-shaped beads, and cylinder amulets.³⁶⁸³ While the pregnant-woman vessels and milk vessels may have belonged to women, the lack of context for the material makes this determination less certain.³⁶⁸⁴ The birth wands, while found in male tombs,³⁶⁸⁵ originally had female owners,³⁶⁸⁶ whereas the feeding cups tended to occur in infant burials.³⁶⁸⁷

³⁶⁷⁶ §§ 2.2.2, 2.3.2, 2.4.2, and 2.5.2.

³⁶⁷⁷ Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 76-9.

³⁶⁷⁸ § 3.2.3, p. 164, n. 969.

³⁶⁷⁹ § 3.2.6, p. 172, n. 1005.

³⁶⁸⁰ § 3.3, 197, 200-2, figs. 158 and 163-164.

³⁶⁸¹ §§ 7.5.2.2-5.

³⁶⁸² J. Richards, *Society and Death in Ancient Egypt: Mortuary Landscapes of the Middle Kingdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 65-6.

³⁶⁸³ For the cylinder amulets, see § 4.4.

³⁶⁸⁴ § 3.5.

³⁶⁸⁵ § 6.3.1.

³⁶⁸⁶ § 6.3.2.1.

³⁶⁸⁷ § 6.4.1.

Materials that held no clear gender nor age restrictions included birth deities and animal figurines. The former had roles that spanned gender,³⁶⁸⁸ such as rebirth and sleep, while still having associations with women and children. Dwarf figurines held both male and female fertility connotations. Excavators found female figurines in tombs of men, women, and children. The public nature of the *lit clos*,³⁶⁸⁹ as well as the records of absences and purchases in Deir el-Medina³⁶⁹⁰ indicated that Egyptians did not view childbirth as an exclusively feminine event, but a matter for the fathers and husbands as well. Further evidence of this male participation includes the husband weeping in Leiden I 348 spell 31, with Rawoser's presence in Papyrus Westcar a possible precedent. As discussed above, male priests and magicians had some role in childbirth, as well as female midwives and nurses.³⁶⁹¹ Appeals to deceased relatives for children came from both genders,³⁶⁹² while one New Kingdom stela from a man made a similar request to Taweret.³⁶⁹³

While the birth material during the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period was mostly funerary, the New Kingdom objects held primarily domestic contexts with some found in temples. During the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period, with exception to Type B and feline figurines,³⁶⁹⁴ the temples within Egypt did not contain clear birth/fertility objects. This pattern was likely due to the general lack of Middle Kingdom temple votives within Egypt.³⁶⁹⁵ In contrast, the temples outside of Egypt appeared more conservative at this time, with votives retaining popularity.³⁶⁹⁶ Many of the votive finds occurred at the Hathor temple at the mining site

³⁶⁸⁸ See above, §§ 2.2-5.

³⁶⁸⁹ § 7.5.1.

³⁶⁹⁰ § 5.2.5.3, "*ḥsmn*"; § 5.5.

³⁶⁹¹ § 5.2.3.

³⁶⁹² § 5.3.

³⁶⁹³ See above, § 2.5.2, Figure 71.

³⁶⁹⁴ See above, § 3.2.3, p. 162; § 6.2.4, pp. 423-4; § 6.5.1, 513, Table 28.

³⁶⁹⁵ See above, § 6.5.2, p. 521, nn. 3330-1.

³⁶⁹⁶ E. Bloxam, "Miners and mistresses: Middle Kingdom mining on the margins," *Journal of Social Archaeology* 6.2 (2006): 277-303; Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, 358-9.

of Gebel Zeit, which is consistent with the contemporary popularity of Hathor as patroness of mining in communities of miners.³⁶⁹⁷ Ipet, the lion-deity,³⁶⁹⁸ rod segments,³⁶⁹⁹ mud crocodiles,³⁷⁰⁰ and dwarf-stands, all occurred in both domestic and funerary sites. The only objects during this period with exclusively domestic context are the Abydos birth brick and the plaque figurines.

The New Kingdom material tended to be more domestic, with some votive. Previous scholars had noted that religious material from houses in the Middle Kingdom include objects that occurred in New Kingdom temples, such as dwarf stands, Type B figurines, and Ipet/Taweret figurines, suggesting some continuity of practice.³⁷⁰¹ The greater number of birth-related votives during this time was likely due to a shift in decorum to allow more votives dedicated by non-elites.³⁷⁰² While some Hathor objects continued to have funerary context, she also occurred in domestic areas. Although excavators found cowries, cowrie imitations, and acacia-seed-shaped beads in tombs, they likely had usage in life first.³⁷⁰³ The female figurines, objects of birth deities, bed models, Wochenlaube ostraca, *lit clos*, and mother-cat amulets all had predominantly domestic context. This development was perhaps due to the separation of solar iconography from birth iconography during this period. Also, there appeared to have been more acceptance of deities in exclusively domestic objects and motifs. Types E and G figurines, with their lack of headdresses, appeared to have been more generalized representations of fertility, possibly explaining their higher frequency in votive settings compared to contemporaries.³⁷⁰⁴ There was a

³⁶⁹⁷ Sadek, *Popular religion*, 8.

³⁶⁹⁸ § 6.2.1.

³⁶⁹⁹ § 7.2.3.

³⁷⁰⁰ § 6.5.1, pp. 517-8 and Table 30.

³⁷⁰¹ Ex: Petrie, *IKG*, 11; Brunton, *Qau III*, 7, pls. 9-10; B. Favolle, *Le Livre du Musée Guimet de Lyon* (Paris: Emmanuel Vitte, 1958), 81; Baines, "Practical religion and piety," 93.

³⁷⁰² G. Pinch and E. Waraska, "Votive Practices," *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (2009): 3-4.

³⁷⁰³ See above, §§ 4.2 and 4.3.

³⁷⁰⁴ See above, §§ 3.2.5 and 3.2.7.

growing notion of a separate birth material versus the more accepted variations of usually funerary objects during the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period.

The fertility/birth material during this period is consistent with the greater expression of domestic cultic practices during this time. The veneration of the king or deity in private houses first occurred in the reign of Thutmose III.³⁷⁰⁵ Domestic religious structures, particularly at Amarna and Deir el-Medina, included altars, niches, and lustration slabs.³⁷⁰⁶ Domestic stepped altars similar to those from Deir el-Medina, albeit without preserved decoration occurred in Medinet Habu,³⁷⁰⁷ Tell el Dab'a,³⁷⁰⁸ and possibly Mirgissa.³⁷⁰⁹ Similarly, 20th Dynasty houses in Lisht also had the same feature, with one house also including a fragment of a limestone stela.³⁷¹⁰ Both Malkata and Medinet Habu produced some of such domestic platforms prior to the Ramesside Period, which undermines the notion that Ramesside piety was a reaction following the Amarna Period.³⁷¹¹ In New Kingdom domestic sites, dedicatees of religious material tended to be lower-status individuals.³⁷¹² While the domestic setting characterizes the birth/fertility

³⁷⁰⁵ J. Budka, *Der König an der Haustür. Die Rolle des ägyptischen Herrschers an dekorierten Türgewänden von Beamten im Neuen Reich* (BzAe 19; Vienna: Afro-Pub., 2001), 8ff.

³⁷⁰⁶ Stevens, *Private religion*, 219-248 and notes; Weiss, *Religious Practice*, 35-115.

³⁷⁰⁷ U. Hölscher, *The excavation of Medinet Habu II: The temples of the Eighteenth Dynasty* (OIP 41; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939), 69-70, fig. 56; Kleinke, *Female spaces*, 46.

³⁷⁰⁸ M. Bietak, *Tell el-Dab'a V: Ein Friedhofsbezirk der mittleren Bronzezeitkultur mit Totentempel und Siedlungsschichten* (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1991), 32.

³⁷⁰⁹ D. Dunham, G. Reisner, and N.F. Wheeler, *Uronarti, Shalfak, Mirgissa: Second Cataract forts II* (Boston: MFA, 1967), 143-9; Kleinke, *Female spaces*, 48-9.

³⁷¹⁰ Mace, "The Egyptian expedition 1920-1921," 11-12; F. Arnold, "Settlement Remains at Lisht-North," in *Haus und Palast im alten Ägypten*, ed. Bietak (Wien: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996), 13, 17, 19-20.

³⁷¹¹ Hölscher, *Excavation II*, 71; Stevens, *Private religion*, 233; A. Koltsida, "Malkata Revisited: Defining Domestic Space at the Palace City of Amenhotep III," in *Proceedings of the 9th International Congress of Egyptologists I*, ed. J.-C. Goyon and C. Cardin (OLA 150; Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 1011-22; L. Weiss, "Personal religious practices: house altars at Deir el-Medina," *JEA* 95 (2009): 207.

³⁷¹² Ex: A. R. Schulman, "Memphite stelae: Documents pertaining to popular religion in ancient Memphis during the New Kingdom and later," *Year Book 1963* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1963): 595-8; Ibid., "Ex-votos of the poor," *JARCE* 6 (1967): 153-6; B. Peterson, "Archäologische Funde aus Sesebi (Sudla) in Nord-Sudan," *Or. Suecana* 16 (1967): 15, Abb. 33; N. Reeves, "An Amarna-period ostrakon from the Valley of the Kings," *Antiquity* 75 (2001): 501-2; Stevens, *Private religion*; T. DuQuesne, *Anubis, Upwawet, and other deities: Personal worship and official religion in ancient Egypt*.

material, many derived from previous Middle Kingdom objects. This pattern is similar to that of ancestor busts, the other main New Kingdom domestic religious tradition at Deir el-Medina³⁷¹³ and other sites,³⁷¹⁴ which built upon previous ancestor worship practices.³⁷¹⁵

Overall, permitted access to the divine via fertility and birth material showed some consistency from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom, as well as growth. Such access did not appear to have significant decorum restrictions based on age, gender, nor social status. Instead, the largest shift was from the predominantly funerary contexts of the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period to the domestic and votive areas of the New Kingdom. This trend was in line with the New Kingdom development of a domestic tradition already present in the Middle Kingdom. We can also view such continuity and expansion upon previous beliefs and symbols through a more strictly diachronic lens.

8.3 Continuity, Discontinuity, Diminishment, and Elaboration

The birth/fertility material can be divided into themes of discontinuity, diminishment, continuity, elaboration, and innovation. The term “diminishment” refers to the continuation of previous objects, but at much reduced numbers and roles in birth iconography. Other items

(Cairo: Supreme Council of Antiquities, 2007); Ibid., “Individualism in Private Religion during the Egyptian New Kingdom - The Question of Amarna Influence on Votive Stelae from Asyut,” in *Persönliche Frömmigkeit: Funktion und Bedeutung individueller Gotteskontakte im interdisziplinären Dialog; Akten der Tagung am Archäologischen Institut der Universität Hamburg* (25. - 27. November 2010), ed. W. Friese et al. (Berlin: Lit, 2011), 51-62; Weiss, *Religious Practice*.

³⁷¹³ J. Keith-Bennett, *Anthropoid Busts of Deir el Medina and other Sites and Collections* (DFIFAO 49; Cairo: FIFAO, 2011); Ibid., “Anthropoid Busts: II: Not from Deir el-Medina alone,” *BES* 3 (1981): 48; Friedman, “On the meaning of some anthropoid busts,” 82-3; Meskell, *Private life*, 114; Ibid., “Memory’s materiality: Ancestral presence, commemorative practice and disjunctive locales,” in *Archaeologies of memory*, ed. S. Alcock and R. Van Dyke (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 44; N. Harrington, “From the cradle to the grave; Anthropoid busts and ancestor cults at Deir el-Medina,” in *Current Research in Egyptology 2003: Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Symposium, UCL*, ed. K. Piquette and S. Love (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 71.

³⁷¹⁴ Keith-Bennett, *Anthropoid Busts*; Ibid., “Catalogue of anthropoid busts from Egyptian sites other than Deir el-Medina,” *BES* 3 (1981): 51-71; Giddy, *Kom Rab’ia*, 299-301, pls. 66 and 92; Ministry of Antiquities, *New discoveries of a domestic shrine for ancestor worship of the early New Kingdom (ca. 1500 BCE) at Tell Edfu* (December 25, 2018).

³⁷¹⁵ Friedman, “On the meaning of some anthropoid busts,” 82-97.

became “elaborated,” meaning new concepts built upon the prior material. While certain objects were “innovations” of the New Kingdom, as we will see below, they took inspiration from previous concepts.

Archaism, the deliberate revival of ancient traditions, is a concept commonly observed elsewhere in ancient Egyptian culture.³⁷¹⁶ In that framework, religious innovations, rather than completely supplanting old forms, modified upon them.³⁷¹⁷ For some of the Middle Kingdom material culture, Morris interpreted them as archaizing revivals of Protodynastic and Early Dynastic temple votives.³⁷¹⁸ These votives included human and animal figurines similar to those of the Middle Kingdom, such as baboons, dwarfs, lions, crocodiles, frogs, and hippos. Depictions of serpopards and griffins, two main figures of the apotropaia, also occurred in the Main Deposit at the Horus Temple in Hierakonpolis. Morris posited that the Type A2 truncated figurines were inspired by broken examples of such votives.³⁷¹⁹

This theory, however, does not fit the evidence. The dating of the Hierakonpolis Main Deposit and Temple of Osiris Khenti-amentiu at Abydos remain uncertain due to prior excavation

³⁷¹⁶ Ex: C. Price, “Archaism and filial piety: an unusual Late Period pair statue from the Cachette (Cairo JE 37136),” in *La Cachette de Karnak: nouvelles perspectives sur les découvertes de Georges Legrain*, ed. L. Coulon (Caire: IFAO, Ministry of Antiquities, 2016), 485-503; A.M. Roth, “Upper Egyptian Heliopolis: Thebes, archaism, and the political ideology of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III,” *BES* 19 (2015): 537-552; C. Huyeng, “Revolutionist or reactionary? Akhenaten's archaism,” in *Amarna in the 21st century*, C. Huyeng and A. Finger (Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2015), 149-205; D. Laboury, “Citations et usages de l'art du Moyen Empire à l'époque thoutmoside,” in *Vergangenheit und Zukunft: Studien zum historischen Bewusstsein in der Thutmosidenzeit*, ed. S. Bickel (Basel: Schwabe, 2013), 11-28; S. J. Allen, “Funerary Pottery in the Middle Kingdom: Archaism or Revival?,” in *Archaism and Innovation*, 319-339.

³⁷¹⁷ Ex: R. Sousa, “The genealogy of images: innovation and complexity in coffin decoration during Dynasty 21,” in *Ancient Egyptian coffins: craft traditions and functionality*, ed. J.H. and M. Vandenbeusch (Leuven: Peeters, 2018), 17-32; M. J. Raven, “The Saqqara necropolis in the Ramesside Period: between tradition and innovation,” in *The Ramesside period in Egypt: studies into cultural and historical processes of the 19th and 20th dynasties*, ed. K. Sabine and U. Rummel (Berlin; Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2018), 239-248; R. J. Leprohon, “The stela of Sehetepibre (CG 20538): borrowings and innovation,” in *Archaism and Innovation*, 277-293; Wegner, “The tomb of Senwosret III at Abydos,” 103-169; F. Simons, “Innovation in serdab decoration in the late Sixth Dynasty,” *JEA* 102 (2016): 196-203.

³⁷¹⁸ Morris, “Middle Kingdom Clappers,” 323-330.

³⁷¹⁹ Morris, “Middle Kingdom Clappers,” 328.

techniques.³⁷²⁰ In particular, excavators of the former did not leave detailed recording of their finds, making the precise context of objects unclear.³⁷²¹ Likewise, the Hierakonpolis deposit was just under an early New Kingdom temple, with an 18th Dynasty scarab and sherd among the finds,³⁷²² thus rendering the dating of uninscribed material indefinite.

A number of the supposedly “archaizing” materials also had precedent in the Old Kingdom. Dwarf figures continued into the Old Kingdom, with reliefs depicting the theme of dwarfs bearing items, such as a female dwarf carrying a box.³⁷²³ As discussed above, griffins appeared as royal figures from the Old Kingdom on, with the theme of trampling human enemies continuing on the birth wands.³⁷²⁴ The apotropaic figures Sobek, the double-lion *Rw.tj*, Heqet, and Ipet/Taweret also occurred in the Pyramid Texts. The latter two first appeared as amulets in significant numbers during the Late Old Kingdom. Likewise, Aha/Bes first occurred in the Late Old Kingdom, rather than the Protodynastic or Early Dynastic. Finally, Morris’ theory on the origins of Type A2 figurines seems rather speculative, with the lack of feet better explained as referencing the *hnr* gender reveal.

8.3.1 Birth and Fertility: Change and Continuity

The birth/fertility material characteristic of the Middle Kingdom include a subset associated with solar rebirth and another connected to feminine fertility (Figure 318). According to current dating, the birth wands lasted into the early 18th Dynasty, whereas the animal figures and rod segments ceased during the Second Intermediate Period, likely in part due a decline in

³⁷²⁰ B. Kemp, “The Osiris temple at Abydos,” *MDAIK* 23 (1968): 153; B. Adams, “Hierakonopolis,” *LÄ* II: 1182-6; Dreyer, *Elephantine VIII*, 44-6; Morris, “Middle Kingdom Clappers,” 323, n. 96.

³⁷²¹ Adams, “Hierakonopolis,” 1182-6.

³⁷²² Dreyer, *Elephantine VIII*, 45.

³⁷²³ Dasen, *Dwarfs*, 131, 138, figs. 9.2 and 9.6, Cat. E 11a and E 39.

³⁷²⁴ §§ 6.2.2 and 6.3.3.2.

faience production.³⁷²⁵ Another factor is the New Kingdom shift to focus on only certain figures from the apotropaia, namely Aha/Bes, Ipet/Taweret, and, to a lesser extent, Heqet. Some of the figures dropped, specifically the serpopard, double-sphinx, vulture, and snakes likely declined due to their stronger association to solar rebirth, rather than birth itself.³⁷²⁶ Similarly, while the baboon figure showed some continuity, its role in New Kingdom birth iconography was significantly reduced likely due to its function as a more strictly solar-birth figure.³⁷²⁷ The torch motif on apotropaia represented the night,³⁷²⁸ which would have been less appropriate in the New Kingdom given the shift away from solar rebirth iconography. During the New Kingdom, the standing lion and griffin rarely occurred as beings pertaining to sleep.³⁷²⁹ The former's more domestic role likely became subsumed under Ipet/Taweret, its frequent counterpart on apotropaia. This absorption likewise would explain the decline of the wrapped cow,³⁷³⁰ with Hathor assuming more prominence in birth iconography. In contrast, the turtle developed a more negative connotation in the New Kingdom.³⁷³¹

³⁷²⁵ Miniaci, "Collapse," 109-142.

³⁷²⁶ §§ 6.2.3, 6.2.5, 6.2.7, and 6.2.11.

³⁷²⁷ § 6.2.9.

³⁷²⁸ § 6.2.15.

³⁷²⁹ §§ 2.2.2, Figure 23; 6.2.1-2.

³⁷³⁰ § 6.2.6.

³⁷³¹ § 6.2.10.

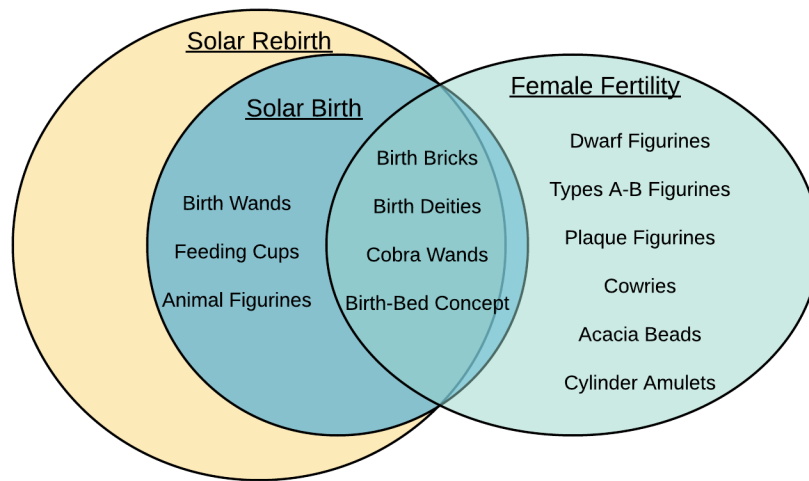


Figure 318 – Middle Kingdom birth/fertility iconography in relation to motifs of solar rebirth.

The female-fertility material culture included dwarf figures, Type A and B figurines, and non-figural amulets. With his standardization into a dwarfish figure, Bes in the New Kingdom likely subsumed much of the fertility role held by dwarf statuettes,³⁷³² particularly males and figures holding musical instruments. Type A was funerary with elite association, whereas Type B was both funerary and votive.³⁷³³ This contextual difference seems to explain the latter's continuance into the 18th Dynasty, when nude female figurines started becoming more domestic and votive. The non-figural amulets exhibit similar trends, with the elite cowrie imitations supplanted by more abstract cowroids and wallet beads,³⁷³⁴ while cylinder amulets disappeared altogether.³⁷³⁵

Certain materials showed continuity. The imagery of Heqet and Ipet/Taweret remained rather standardized over time, with the latter's shift to a tripartite wig likely emphasized her

³⁷³² § 3.1.2.

³⁷³³ §§ 3.2.1.3 and 3.2.2.

³⁷³⁴ §§ 4.2.2-3.

³⁷³⁵ § 4.4.

connection to women.³⁷³⁶ While featuring design shifts in shape and the presence of heads, plaque figurines remained in lower-status domestic contexts. Continuous non-figural amulets tended to be either natural or nature-inspired, namely the cowries, cowroids, and acacia-seed beads.³⁷³⁷ Despite the change in decoration, feeding cups continued in the New Kingdom. Another area of continuity is the depiction of successful birth on the Abydos brick and royal birth scenes,³⁷³⁸ with the mother holding the already-born child and flanked by two midwives. Though the Abydos birth is so far the only known physical example of such an object,³⁷³⁹ the textual records surrounding birth bricks ranged from the Old Kingdom through the Greco-Roman era.³⁷⁴⁰ Interestingly, the flanking posts seen on the brick and later Wochenlaube ostraca³⁷⁴¹ perhaps indicated the birth pylon/pavilion mentioned in Leiden I 348 spell 33.³⁷⁴²

Medical/magical spells demonstrated continuity in both materials utilized and underlying concepts. Knot amulets, sometimes invoking Tait, remained as a magical means of closing off blood and malevolent forces, with use in anti-miscarriage and post-birth protective spells.³⁷⁴³ The protective tampon in spells against miscarriage had precedent in *CT* 148.³⁷⁴⁴ Spells using figurines include one involving a child figure and a couple specifying a “dwarf of clay.”³⁷⁴⁵ As discussed above, the fertility/pregnancy tests of the New Kingdom were close copies of those from the Middle Kingdom Papyrus Kahun.³⁷⁴⁶ Relatedly, the concept of the door threshold as a liminal space from a couple of New Kingdom texts likewise appeared in the birth wands.³⁷⁴⁷ The

³⁷³⁶ § 2.5.2.

³⁷³⁷ §§ 4.2.1, 4.2.3, and 4.3.

³⁷³⁸ §§ 7.2.1 and 7.3.1.

³⁷³⁹ § 7.2.1.

³⁷⁴⁰ § 7.2.4.

³⁷⁴¹ For latter, see § 7.4.1.

³⁷⁴² See § 5.2.4.3.

³⁷⁴³ Ram. III B 12-14, 23-34; Berlin 3027 Spells L-O, Q, U, V; London 28-30.

³⁷⁴⁴ § 5.2.4.2, BM 10059 spells 25, 27-29.

³⁷⁴⁵ Respectively, Ram. IV C 17-24; Leiden I 348 spells 30-31.

³⁷⁴⁶ § 5.2.4.1.

³⁷⁴⁷ Berlin 3038 spell 198; Carlsberg VIII spell 6; § 6.3.3.2.

most consistent features of the medical/magical texts is the equation of the child with either Horus or the sun god,³⁷⁴⁸ whereas the mother represented Hathor/Isis.³⁷⁴⁹

A number of materials featured developments in the New Kingdom. Aha/Bes shifted from the Middle Kingdom lion-man to the standardized leonine dwarf of the New Kingdom, with the feather-headdress appearing more frequently in the Ramesside period. A couple of new poses, namely Bes-as-musician and dancing-Bes, appear especially associated with domestic and daily-life functions. At the same time, the female Ahat/Beset counterpart became rarer. Hathor, who rarely occurred in private Middle Kingdom objects, became more popular and domestic. From previous votive origins, pebble figurines came in more shapes and became specifically Theban and Hathoric.³⁷⁵⁰ Likewise, amulets of felines, already with some connection to Hathor, became more explicitly linked with the goddess, with mother-cat amulets likely associated with birth.³⁷⁵¹

The most notable expansion is the concept of the birth-bed. During the Middle Kingdom, this notion occurs implicitly in bedroom objects such as boxes, headrests, and bed inlays, as well as tomb scenes depicting birth wands in association with beds.³⁷⁵² In at least three cases,³⁷⁵³ excavators found Middle Kingdom bed models with female figurines. The concept of an enclosed birth structure occurred with the mention of Amenemhat III's "shrine of birth," which in turn probably originated from previous funerary Old Kingdom beds.³⁷⁵⁴ Both in depictions and actual furniture, the New Kingdom birth-beds used a number of previous elements. The main

³⁷⁴⁸ Ram. III B 10-11, 20-23, 23-34; Berlin 3027 spells D-E, O, U; Leiden I 348 spell 34.

³⁷⁴⁹ Ram. III B 23-34; Ram. IV C 12-15; Berlin 3027 spells B, D, N; BM 10059 spells 26-28, 31; Leiden I 348 spell 34.

³⁷⁵⁰ § 3.4.

³⁷⁵¹ §§ 6.2.4, p. 426 and 6.5.1, p. 513 and Table 28.

³⁷⁵² §§ 2.2.1, 31; 2.5.1, 72; 6.2.16.1; 6.3.2.2.1.

³⁷⁵³ § 3.3, p. 197, n. 1103, Figures 155-6.

³⁷⁵⁴ § 7.3.1.

deities were Aha/Bes and, to a somewhat lesser extent, Ipet/Taweret.³⁷⁵⁵ The hairstyle of the women in the Wochenlaube ostraca harkened to certain Middle Kingdom figurines.³⁷⁵⁶ Renenutet, who appeared earlier on the birth wands, occurs in Type F figurines and Wochenlaube ostraca as a flatter space-saving red serpent.³⁷⁵⁷ Depictions of kohl jars in the Wochenlaube are reminiscent of the figured kohl jars of the early-to-mid-18th Dynasty.³⁷⁵⁸ Women with Bes-tattoos, seen in some Type F figurines and one *lit clos*, may have some origins in the depiction of Ipet/Taweret on some Type A1.³⁷⁵⁹ In addition, the female dancer from the *lit clos*-altar held a similar connection to the goddesses disguised as dancers in Papyrus Westcar and Type A dancer figurines.³⁷⁶⁰

A more standardized fertility/birth iconography emerged in the New Kingdom as more of its own genre (Figure 319), in contrast to the Middle Kingdom relationship between solar rebirth and birth motifs. Mold-made nude female figurines from regional workshops first became common during this time.³⁷⁶¹ Of these forms, Types D and F were the closest parallels to the birth-bed iconography, whereas Type E appeared to have been a more generalized version, explaining its presence in both votive and domestic contexts. Another new feature was the use of convolvulus,³⁷⁶² which may be due to the emphasis on day/life motifs, as opposed to the nightly solar rebirth iconography of the apotropaia.

Nevertheless, these newer forms had their origins from previous Middle Kingdom concepts. Type C figurines,³⁷⁶³ for instance, were an evolution from Type B2. Type G figurines,

³⁷⁵⁵ §§ 2.2.2, pp. 40-2, Figures 18-20; 2.5.2, 88, Figure 65; 3.3, p. 197, n. 1106, Figure 158; 7.3.2; 7.5.2.1.

³⁷⁵⁶ § 7.4.1, 553, n. 3504, Figure 293 and § 3.2.1.1.

³⁷⁵⁷ §§ 3.2.6, p. 174, n. 1021, Figures 137-8; 6.2.12; 7.4.1, pp. 529-530.

³⁷⁵⁸ §§ 6.2.16.1, pp. 463-4; 7.4.1, p. 555, n. 3512.

³⁷⁵⁹ §§ 3.2.1.1, pp. 128-9, Figure 101; 3.2.6, p. 172, n. 1005; 7.5.2.3.

³⁷⁶⁰ § 3.2.1, especially § 3.2.1.5; § 5.4, pp. 383-4, nn. 2352-7; § 7.5.2.3.

³⁷⁶¹ Waraska, *Female Figurines*, 76-9.

³⁷⁶² §§ 3.2.6, pp. 174, Figures 137-9; 3.3, pp. 202-3; 7.4.1, pp. 561-2; 7.5.2.2-3.

³⁷⁶³ § 3.2.3.

especially with their emphasis on the pubic area, built upon previous handmade plaque figurines.³⁷⁶⁴ Imagery from Type 2 molded bed models derived from previous reliefs depicting the *ssš wꜣd*.³⁷⁶⁵ The pregnant-woman jars represented a newer manifestation of Taweret and dwarf iconography, as well as displayed the notion of protective tampons.³⁷⁶⁶ Likewise, the mother's-milk vessels had their basis in medical/magical spells, including those pertaining to fertility and children's health issues.³⁷⁶⁷

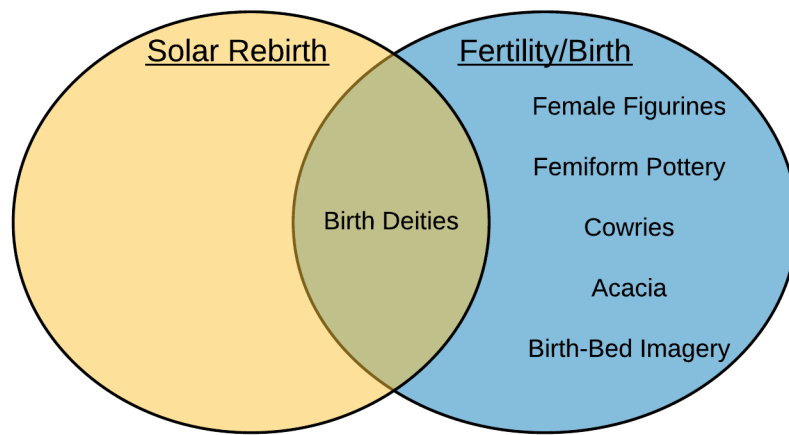


Figure 319 – New Kingdom fertility/birth iconography in relation to solar rebirth imagery.

8.4. Conclusion

The focus of this investigation has been assessing what happened to birth practices during the shift from the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period to the New Kingdom, determining what changed and possibly why. Likewise, this work examines how these changes related to the wider concepts of personal piety and decorum. Overall, the material has experienced subtle modifications over time, building on previous concepts, rather than major

³⁷⁶⁴ § 3.2.7.

³⁷⁶⁵ § 3.3, pp. 204-5.

³⁷⁶⁶ § 3.5.1.

³⁷⁶⁷ § 3.5.2. See also Berlin 3038 spells 193-4, Ebers 273, and Berlin 3027 spell I.

alterations. Several issues are present with the material, namely the preservation of evidence, the degree of regionalization versus standardization of object types, and the differences between objects discussed in the texts versus the archaeological remains. The developments in birth and fertility practices discussed above hold larger implications for Egyptian society and culture.

8.4.1 Preservation of Evidence

One of the difficulties in assessing fertility and birth practices is the incomplete and skewed nature of what has been preserved. This bias can be observed in the type of materials preserved and the funerary nature of most excavated sites. These issues occur in both the textual and material record from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom.

The bulk of medical-magical spells discussed natural materials that were applied into or on the patient, leaving little to no archaeological traces. An exception may be the mother's milk vessels of the New Kingdom, which possibly held the milk of a mother who gave birth to a boy. The same issue applies to amulets made of less permanent materials, such as knot amulets. In contrast, the archaeological record preserved the mouse bones, hand seals, birth brick, and Bes figurines and amulets described in the texts.

As discussed above,³⁷⁶⁸ the material evidence of the New Kingdom has a Theban bias. In addition, there is still an overwhelming bias in material culture towards funerary objects. This issue is especially prevalent with the Middle Kingdom material, with the bulk of domestic evidence coming from Lahun and a lack of Middle Kingdom votives within Egypt. In some cases, the texts written on some objects aided in establishing a use during regular life, such as Type A2 figurines and birth wands. With the latter, use wear on some objects also support an original non-funerary function. Equivalent iconography on other objects that were more present

³⁷⁶⁸ See §1.2, p. 20.

in domestic contexts, such as dwarf stands, seal impressions, figurines of Ipet/Taweret and Aha/Bes, and the Abydos birth brick also indicated a domestic role for the Middle Kingdom imagery.

Despite these preservation issues, there is enough evidence to determine access to various types of material. While some objects, namely the birth wands and semi-precious cowrie and acacia-seed imitations were the purview of the elite, the feminine-oriented fertility material, including the main birth deities, was more accessible to non-elites. Another aspect in the distribution of birth and fertility material is the issue of regional variation, and its contrast to the standardization seen in the New Kingdom evidence.

8.4.2 Regionalization vs. Standardization

In contrast to the wider geographic spread of the Middle Kingdom material, objects from the New Kingdom tended to be more standardized and prevalent in the Theban region. However, both periods featured localized versions of birth and fertility iconography. For example, regional decoration of cowroids include plants motifs in the Delta and Fayum, royal names in more royally controlled sites like Malkata and Faras, and amuletic symbols in Amarna. These regional variations are especially present with nude female figurines, apotropaia, and birth-bed iconography.

The manufacture, geographic spread, and contexts of nude female figurine types appears to affect the degree of regional variation versus standardization. In the Middle Kingdom, Type A figurines, though limited to the royal cult, were notably unstandardized. This pattern is in contrast to the locally specific decoration of plaque figurines across much of Egypt and the more standard appearance of Type B figurines. During the New Kingdom, molded figurines tended to more standardized in appearance than handmade figurines. Exceptions include Type F with its

regional stylizations and the more regionally specific Type G. While the few Middle Kingdom bed models were handmade and either made from wood or clay, those from the New Kingdom were universally made of clay and were regionally specific to the Theban region and Amarna, following the same trend as New Kingdom female figurines. For both periods, those figurines with a large regional spread either were largely domestic with more local variation, namely Type F and plaque figurines, or were more standardized and present in votive contexts, such as Types B and E. The latter's appearance likely indicated production in more centralized workshops connected to temples, with the generalized female form functioning for multiple stages from fertility through childbirth. In practical terms, these standard forms meant worshippers did not have to purchase as many for votive use, resulting in less overfill of votives for the priestly administration to clear out to make way for new objects. In contrast, regional workshops tailored the more domestic and variant figurine types for local use. These variants included religious themes like tattooing, convolvulus vines, snakes, and paint color, with red for blood, and white for purity. Pebbles, in contrast, were always localized features, with early examples with forms locally significant to that of the temple cult. The more variety in types of New Kingdom pebbles figures was likely due to the more variety in local cults in the Theban area.

The decoration of the main apotropaic objects, namely the birth wands and animal figurines, likely reflected the regional cult influence of the main regions of manufacture. As discussed above,³⁷⁶⁹ the wands had motifs specific to Thebes, Abydos, Middle Egypt, and the Memphis/Fayum region. This reflected regional religious beliefs, with felines and the Aha-child characteristic of Memphis/Fayum, the standing lion more common in the environs of Abydos, and the Theban region with the sole examples of the double-bull motif. The animal figurines also had regional themes correlating with known cults, with lions in Northern Upper Egypt, felines at

³⁷⁶⁹ See § 6.3.1, p. 472.

Serabit el-Khadim and Byblos, baboons from Egyptian sites in the Memphis/Fayum region, and crocodiles at Lahun. Due to the absence of child burials from cemeteries and the concentration of domestic evidence at Lahun, the feeding cups dating to the Middle Kingdom concentrated at Lahun, whereas those from the New Kingdom saw a wider spread of sites. Unfortunately, there are not enough examples with apotropaic decoration to determine any regional variation regarding motifs.

Consistent with the evidence of fertility practices with the New Kingdom, the Wochenlaube ostraca and *lit clos*-altars were characteristic of Deir el-Medina and Amarna. While domestic altars and cultic installations occurred in other sites,³⁷⁷⁰ they did not feature any preserved birth-related decoration. However, the decorative themes of the Wochenlaube and *lit clos*-altars were not limited to the Theban region. Type D figurines, which featured women with perfume cones similar to those from the ostraca scenes, were distributed in capital cities including Memphis. Female figurines holding mirrors occurred in Deir el-Medina, Beth Shan, and Sawama, as well as possible Gurob. Examples of Bes-tattoos like the wall-painting of a female dancer³⁷⁷¹ occurred at Lahun/Sedment, Mirgissa, and Thebes. The convolvulus vine occurred on three Type F figurines from Gurob, one from Rifeh, and one from Thebes.³⁷⁷² The snake occurred in Type F figures from Middle Egypt and Thebes.³⁷⁷³ An example of the nurse occurred with a figurine from Gurob.³⁷⁷⁴

The factors surrounding the expression of regionalism include production and beliefs. Object types that are handmade, with locally available materials such as clay, and widespread in

³⁷⁷⁰ See above, § 8.2.1, p. 589, nn. 3707-11.

³⁷⁷¹ § 3.2.6, p. 171, n. 1005. For this dancer, see above, § 7.5.2.3.

³⁷⁷² See above, § 3.2.6, p. 174, n. 1020, Figures 137-9.

³⁷⁷³ See above, § 3.2.6, p. 174, n. 1021, Figures 138-9.

³⁷⁷⁴ See above, § 3.2.6, p. 174, n. 1018, Figure 132.

domestic sites were more likely to express regional specialization versus those that were made in molds from certain workshops or came in precious materials. Likewise, a number of the regional differences reflected local beliefs such as the cults of certain deities. Since we see these regional trends in both the less elite female-oriented birth iconography and apotropaia, class did not seem to be a major factor in the expression of regional trends. In all the cases discussed, the corpus involved variations on common fertility themes. This pattern is in contrast to the separation between material discussed in the textual record and certain types of objects in the archaeological record.

8.4.3 Textual Evidence vs. Material Culture

Compared to the material culture, the texts showed less shifts over time, and did not discuss certain object types such as the apotropaia. There was conceptual consistency in the medical-magical texts in terms of concerns, bricks, notions surrounding the female body, and the association of the mother and child with Isis/Hathor and Horus/sun god. There was a shift with New Kingdom mentions of “figurines of a dwarf,” “amulets of health,” and “birth amulets,” which reflected the New Kingdom dwarf figure of Bes. Similarly, the birth story of Papyrus Westcar only mentioned the more common elements associated with feminine fertility, such as the use of birth bricks. For example, the birth role of Heqet in the spell correlated to that seen in contemporary amulets, figurines, and birth wands. Likewise, the concept of Nephthys and Isis serving as midwives also occurred in the Abydos birth brick and New Kingdom royal birth scenes.

There are a couple factors in this difference between texts and material culture. One factor may be the practice of copying older medical-magical texts, seen especially in the fertility spells. Some medical-magical spells with neither clear magic ingredients nor physiological reasoning are more difficult to assess. There also was more variation in the conditions mentioned

in texts, with some conditions mentioned only once or during one time period. It thus makes it hard to track shifts over time. The main distinction appears to have been in audience. The medical-magical texts, which comprise the bulk of the textual evidence, were written by scribes, with application for a wider patient population. This usage would thus explain the lack of apotropaia mentioned in these spells. A similar situation may have also applied to Papyrus Westcar, with the audience perhaps including the lower elite, as opposed to the high elite named on contemporary birth wands. In contrast, the correlation between the Deir el-Medina purchase receipts to the material culture is likely due to both coming from the same population. This distinction between elite and less elite material types appears to have been the largest factor involving the change and continuity of fertility practices from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom.

8.4.4 Social and Cultural Factors Involved in Shifts of Fertility Practices

As discussed above, the apotropaia, especially the wands, were associated with elites. This is also true for cylinder amulets and direct cowrie imitations. As elite-associated iconography, the wands and many of the animal figurines were likely viewed as less appropriate in regular homes. Interestingly, the Abydos birth brick, with both Hathorian and apotropaic decoration, appeared to have associations with both the solar birth and female fertility imagery of the Middle Kingdom. The weakened power of said elite during the Second Intermediate Period may have undermined the use of apotropaia in wider contexts, possibly indicating a lack of ivory production. Likewise, the decline of the elite would have meant the decline of the royal cult at the heart of Type A figurines. In addition, the reduction of some decorum restrictions, such as the use of direct Hathor imagery in domestic contexts and the depiction of non-divine women in birth iconography, was perhaps due to the Second Intermediate Period deterioration in elite power to enforce such limitations. With the advent of the Dynasty 17, a revised elite, who may not have

been the same families as the previous elites, likely emerged. Those elite materials that continued seemed have had a connection to less-elite equivalents. For example, wallet beads were perhaps inspired by the less direct cowroid form. Acacia-seed beads in semi-precious materials likewise continued perhaps because of their wider reference as anti-bleeding material.

Likely less changed overall with material access for non-elite individuals. Clay and cowries were still readily available natural materials. There was more conceptual continuity with the non-elite female-fertility oriented imagery, such as the continuation of birth deities. Changes tended to be more subtle, such as the transition of Type B into Type C figurines, or coalesced previous notions, such as the merger of Aha/Bes with dwarfs and Ipet/Taweret subsuming the previous domestic role of the standing-lion deity. Perhaps Egyptians eventually viewed the dwarf and lion-deity as redundant or functioning the same as the more popular Aha/Bes and Ipet/Taweret, leading to their absorption by the latter. The Middle Kingdom form of birth-bed concept overall appeared less associated with elites, especially with the female figurines on bed models. This origin means that the New Kingdom birth-bed iconography derived from non-elite Upper Egyptian/Theban material culture, which then spread with the advent of the New Kingdom. Likewise, the house cult concept seen in the material culture of Lahun, such as the dwarf stands, appeared to have continued in the New Kingdom, especially in the houses of Amarna and Deir el-Medina. The greater continuity seen with non-elite materials indicates that the bigger political changes of the Second Intermediate Period did not disrupt regular lives like it had done to elites. These class distinctions in the material culture have larger effects within Egyptian culture.

8.4.5 Fertility Practices Within Overall Egyptian Context

The shifts in fertility and birth practices from the Middle Kingdom through the New Kingdom feature larger implications in terms of the economy, society, and religious practices.

The material, with certain aspects and themes shared across class, gender, and age across wide areas of the country, can serve as a microcosm to observe larger developments in Egyptian culture.

The change in fertility material reflected economic developments, both in terms of the availability of materials and manufacture of objects. With the decline of faience production and availability of ivory and steatite after the Middle Kingdom, there was a corresponding decrease in birth wands, faience figurines, and rod segments. This trend is in contrast to the less elite feminine fertility objects in more widely available materials like clay, cowrie shells, and acacia. Type B figurines thus continued into the early 18th Dynasty and evolved into Type C, in contrast to Type A figurines. The continued use of natural acacia likewise probably explains the continuance of acacia-seed imitation beads. While we so far have only one preserved birth brick, the concept continued well past the Middle Kingdom, unlike the related rod segments. Thus, the economic disruption of the Second Intermediate Period occurred amongst the elite and their material culture, whereas non-elites did not face a similar disturbance.

Manufacture affected both the appearance and distribution of birth-related material. For example, the decoration of cowroids and birth wands reflected the local cults of the regional workshops which produced these objects. Along the same vein, a single workshop likely produced the mother's milk vessels, indicating a more local method of containing breast milk than the more widespread contemporaneous feeding cups. The mold-made female figurines of the New Kingdom can be subdivided between more region-specific types (Types C and D), widespread but regionally variant (Type F), and a more universal form (Type E). As discussed above, provincial workshops produced these region-specific and locally variant types, whereas temple workshops manufactured Type E. Overall, the mold-made figurines featured a slim woman, a standard of Egyptian official art. Likewise, the generally more standard appearance of

the birth deities in New Kingdom amulets corresponds to the use of molds. In contrast, the handmade forms tended to have steatopygous features, emphasizing female genitalia, and included depictions of pregnancy and even birth.

The developments of birth iconography shed light on the effects of political change on material culture and gender roles. While the Middle Kingdom solar birth iconography saw a decline during the Second Intermediate Period corresponding to the disruption of the political status quo, the female-oriented fertility imagery appeared less effected. Thus, the political change did not seem to affect non-elites as much in their day-to-day lives. As discussed above,³⁷⁷⁵ some previous scholarship has distinguished between a masculine and feminine sphere of influence, with birth and fertility demarcated as pertaining to the latter. Indeed, some scholars had suggested that the father was not present during childbirth.³⁷⁷⁶ However, the birth story of Papyrus Westcar, the records from Deir el-Medina, and the distribution of female figurines and fertility votives, pleas to the dead, tomb scenes involving birth wands, and *lit clos*-altars all indicate that birth was a concern for the immediate family as a whole.

The birth and fertility corpus also clarifies the accessibility of certain religious materials and the distinction between objects and beliefs pertaining to daily-life and the afterlife. As discussed above,³⁷⁷⁷ scholarly discussions of decorum restrictions versus expressions of piety generally consider the former to loosen over time, particularly during the New Kingdom. While restrictions in the direct depiction of Hathor in her fertility role relaxed during the New Kingdom, the less strictly birth-oriented motifs of the Middle Kingdom apotropaia became restricted to the funerary realm as a new distinct and standardized birth-bed iconography emerged. This trend

³⁷⁷⁵ § 7.5.3, p. 576, n. 3617.

³⁷⁷⁶ For example, see § 5.4, p. 384, n. 2361.

³⁷⁷⁷ See above, § 8.2.

corresponds to a shift in the final deposition context of birth and fertility materials from largely funerary to predominantly domestic sites. With the decline of state power, the materials for apotropaia became even less accessible, which likely rendered the objects too precious to the wear-and-tear of continued domestic use. In contrast, the reduction of elite control in the domestic realm perhaps contributed to Hathor's more direct domestic role and the expansion of non-divine women from figurines to a wider role in birth iconography. Meanwhile, the medical-magical texts, though written by scribes, appear to have been more accessible for treating a wider patient population, likely explaining their notable continuity in terms of themes and concerns. Egyptians perhaps eventually viewed the more accessible birth materials from the Second Intermediate Period through the New Kingdom as more reliable. Thus, notions of decorum surrounding the use of certain material did not universally become more relaxed over time. Instead, shifts in decorum involved factors such as context and material access.

The relationship between religious materials for the afterlife and those for daily life does not appear to have been static, as demonstrated by the fertility corpus. Many of the Middle Kingdom objects had a final placement in funerary sites, particularly birth wands, animal figurines, feeding cups, nude female figurines, and dwarf figurines. Many of these object types had equivalents in domestic areas, such as dwarf stands from Lahun, some animal figurines, at least one birth wand, feeding cups, and figures of Aha and Ipet. In contrast, the New Kingdom iconography was overwhelmingly domestic, with some objects (Type E figurines and pebble figures) occurring in more votive areas. This birth-bed iconography was thus seen as less appropriate for a final funerary deposition. As discussed above, the political and economic disruptions of the Second Intermediate Period primarily affected elites and their goods, particularly funerary items, rather than non-elites. This disparate impact in turn set the development of domestic and funerary practices in different directions, with the former based on

non-elite concepts and materials. Assessment of a funerary object type's possible daily life function would therefore need to consider diachronic change, as well as possible equivalent iconography from domestic sites.

8.4.6 Summary

While the Middle Kingdom tradition had solar birth versus female fertility distinctions, the New Kingdom featured a distinct standardized iconography. Many of the motifs of the latter, nevertheless, had origins in the Middle Kingdom, especially the birth-bed and main birth deities. Some material had elite associations and connections with women, but access to birth/fertility magic did not appear restricted by status, gender, nor age. Instead, the context of private objects shifted from the funerary realm to domestic and votive spaces. Items associated with lower status individuals, such as female plaque figurines and natural cowrie shells, were among the most continuous, whereas elite forms were more likely to shift or phase out over time.

Appendix: Fertility Figurines

Table 32 - Type A1 Figurines

Site	Tomb	Number	Bibliography
Rifeh	98	1	Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , 59.
Sheikh Farag	S.F.8	1	Boston MFA 13.3567
Sheikh Farag	S.F.12	2	Boston MFA 13.3603 (with hair 13.3601), 13,3604
Sheikh Farag	S.F. 6013	1	Boston MFA 13.3594 (paddle doll hair). Accessed from online museum catalog 1/15/2015.
Sheikh Farag	S.F. 25	1	MFA excavation records; Morris, "Paddle dolls," n. 30, found with female figure MFA 13.355.
Naga el-Deir	N 232	1	Boston MFA 47.1691
Naga el-Deir	N 428	2	Boston MFA 47.1692-3
Naga el-Deir	449, chamber C	1	Morris, "Paddle dolls," n. 31.
Beni Hasan	1	1	Garstang, <i>Burial Customs</i> , 152, fig. 150, 211; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs," 313. Location stated to be Liverpool.
Beni Hasan	9	2	Garstang, <i>Burial Customs</i> , 211-212, fig. 150; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs," 313. Location of one stated to be Liverpool Institute of Archaeology.
Beni Hasan	23	1	Garstang, <i>Burial Customs</i> , 211-212, pl. vii.i; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs," 313. Location stated to be Liverpool Insitute of Archaeology.
Beni Hasan	106	1	Garstang, <i>Burial Customs</i> , 152, 216; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs," 313.
Beni Hasan	117	1	Garstang, <i>Burial Customs</i> , 211-12, 216, 225, 229; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs," 313.
Beni Hasan	424	3	Garstang, <i>Burial Customs</i> , 225; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs," 313.
Beni Hasan	511	1	Garstang, <i>Burial Customs</i> , 211-12, 216, 225, 229; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs," 313.
Beni Hasan	546	Multiple	Garstang, <i>Burial Customs</i> , 229; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs," 313
Beni Hasan	556	1	Garstang, <i>Burial Customs</i> , 229; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs," 313
Beni Hasan	767	Multiple	Garstang, <i>Burial customs</i> , 239
Beni Hasan	773	2	Garstang, <i>Burial customs</i> , 239
Beni Hasan	843	3	Garstang, <i>Burial customs</i> , 241

Assasif	101, 104, 110, 111, 126, 132, 510, 511, 601, 602, 604, 801, 806, 811, 813, 815, 816, 817, 819, 822, 826, 828, 830, 839, 1112	92	Morris, "Paddle dolls," 75, n. 33. Information on individual objects such as MMA 31.3.43, 15.10.90, 31.3.45, 31.3.40, 31.3.36-7, 27.3.52b, and 15.10.103 can be found in museum online database.
Thebes	TT 313	1	MMA 26.3.219a, b. Accessed from online museum catalog 1/15/2015.
Thebes	TT 413	22	M. Saleh, <i>Three Old Kingdom Tombs at Thebes</i> , V.1-3 (Mainz, 1977).
West Thebes	Moller's 35	2	R. Anthes, "Die deutschen Grabungen auf der Westseite von Theben in den Jahren 1911 und 1913," <i>MDAIK</i> 12 (1943): 14, Abb. 10.
Thebes	Ramesseum	1	Quibell, <i>Ramesseum</i> , 3, pl. III.9.
Drah abu Neggeh	K02.1	2	U. Rummel, <i>Meeting the Past. 100 Years in Egypt. German Archaeological Institute Cairo 1907-2007, Catalogue of the Special Exhibition in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo [19th November, 2007 to 15th January, 2008]</i> (Cairo, 2007), 35.
Elephantine	Town	1	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel," 84-5, Fig. 27.4.

Table 33 - Type A2 Figurines

Region	Site	Context	Details	Date	Subtype	No.	Bibliography
Nubia	Faras	Temple		SIP	N/A	2	Griffith, "Oxford Excavations in Nubia," pl. 19.5, 27.
Nubia	Kuban	Tomb	C?	12D.	D	1	C.M. Firth, <i>The archaeological survey of Nubia: report for 1910-1911</i> (Cairo: Government Press, 1927), 49, 59, pl. 27e.

UE (S)	Deir el-Bahari	Tomb	Asasif, T24	MK	b-c	2	Type C possibly MFA 97.922. MMA 26.7.1416: Carnarvon and Carter, <i>Five Years's explorations</i> , 32, pl. 44.3 (Type b with fillet, wood); Hayes, <i>Scepter</i> I, 221; A. Niwiński, "Miscellanea de Deir el-Bahari," <i>MDAIK</i> 41 (1985): 198.
UE (S)	Deir el-Bahari	Tomb	M	12D.	c	1	pos. MFA 97.922. H.E. Winlock, "The Museum's excavations at Thebes," <i>BMMA</i> 18, <i>December II</i> . (1923): 20, fig. 15.
UE (S)	Dra Abu el-Naga	Tomb	Area of TT 11-12	MK	c	1	Menédez, "Figurines and statuettes," no. 1.
UE (S)	Dra Abu el-Naga	Tomb		MK	a	1	Keimer, <i>Remarques</i> , 18-19.
UE (S)	Elephantine	Town		13-e.18D.	b	1	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 87.
UE (S)	Elephantine	Town	Houses	13D.	d	2	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 87, figs. 27.6 and 27.8.
UE (S)	Elephantine	Town		13-e.18D.	d	2	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 87.
UE (S)	Elephantine	Town		13-e.18D.	N/A	2	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 87.
UE (S)	Elephantine	Town		17D.	N/A	1	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 86, Fig. 27.9.
UE (S)	Elephantine	Town	Roman wall	MK?	N/A	1	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 87, Fig. 27.5.
UE (S)	Esna	Tomb		MK	d	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 85-7, figs. 49, 51-2.
UE (S)	Esna	Tomb		SIP	d	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 85-7, figs. 49, 51-2. Fig. 51 shows SIP limestone Liv.M. 1905 from grave 126.
UE (S)	Esna	Tomb		SIP	N/A	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 85-7, figs. 49, 51-2.

UE (S)	Ramesseum	Tomb		l.MK	c	1	Quibell, <i>Ramesseum</i> , 3, pl. 3.
UE (S)	Ramesseum	Tomb		l.MK	d	1	Quibell, <i>Ramesseum</i> , 3, pl. 3.
UE (S)	Ramesseum	Tomb		l.MK	N/A	3	Quibell, <i>Ramesseum</i> , 3, pl. 3.
UE (S)	Theban region	Tomb		MK	a-d	8	Hayes, <i>Scepter I</i> , 221, fig. 136.
UE (S)	Theban region	Tomb		MK	d	1	M.-L. Buhl, <i>A hundred masterpieces from the ancient Near East in the National Museum of Denmark</i> (Copenhagen: National Museum of Denmark, 1974), 44-5.
UE (N)	Abydos	Mortuary Temple		MK	c	1	Torso and head of a woman, limestone, SA.7453 (42-8-2). Wegner, <i>Mortuary Temple of Senwosret III</i> , 270, fig. 119.7.
UE (N)	Abydos	Tomb		MK	d	1	Garstang, <i>El-Arábah</i> , 13, pl. 17.
UE (N)	Abydos	Tomb		MK	d	1	Müller, <i>Ägyptische Kunstwerke</i> , 59, pl. 93.
UE (N)	Abydos	Tomb	M?	MK	N/A	1	Randall-MacIver and Mace, <i>El Amrah</i> , 87, pl. 43; D.C. Patch, <i>Reflections of Greatness</i> , 36-7, Cat. 25c.
ME	Amarna	Town		18D.	d	1	Stevens, <i>Private religion</i> , 87.
ME	Deir el-Bersha	Tomb		12D.	a	1	D'Auria et al., <i>Mummies and Magic</i> , 124, no. 52.
ME	Hawara	Tomb	FC	12D.	b	1	London UC 16148; W.M.F. Petrie, <i>Labyrinth</i> , 36, pl. 30.
ME	Lahun	Town		MK	b	2	London UC 16725-6.
ME	Lahun	Town		MK	N/A	2	London UC 16723-4; Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , 59-60, pl. 52, 390-1.
ME	Lisht	Tomb	F?	12D.	a	3	Lansing and Hayes, "The excavations at Lisht," 30, figs. 28-29.
ME	Lisht	Tomb		MK	a	1	Keimer, <i>Remarques</i> , 24, pl. 14.
ME	Lisht	Tomb		MK	a-d	"32"	Hayes, <i>Scepter I</i> , 221, fig. 136.

ME	Lisht	Tomb	F?	12D.	c	1	Lansing and Hayes, "Excavations at Lisht," 30, figs. 28-29.
LE	Abusir	Tomb		MK	a	1	Cairo CG 29133; L. Keimer, <i>Remarques sur le tatouage</i> , 22, pl. 14.
LE	el-Matariya (Heliopolis)	Tomb		l.MK	c	1	Fitzwilliam E. 191.1939. Bourriau, <i>Pharaohs and Mortals</i> , 125, no. 119; G.D. Hornblower, "Predynastic figures," 40, pl. ix,4.
Syro-P	Byblos	Temple		MK	c	3	Dunand, <i>Fouilles de Byblos</i> 1950/1958, 763, pl. 99.
Syro-P	Byblos	Temple		MK	d	1	Dunand, <i>Fouilles de Byblos</i> 1950/1958, 763, pl. 99.
Syro-P	Byblos	Temple		MK	N/A	4	Dunand, <i>Fouilles de Byblos</i> 1950/1958, 763, pl. 99.
Red Sea	Gebel Zeit	Temple		MK	N/A	1	P. Posener-Kriéger, "Les Travaux de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale en 1985-1986," <i>BIFAO</i> 86 (1986): 381.

Table 34 - Type B Figurines

Subtype	Context	Region	Site	Date	Details	No.	Bibliography
1	Tomb	UE (N)	Abydos	SIP		4	T.E. Peet, <i>The cemeteries of Abydos</i> II, 63-64, pl. 14; Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 16, 124, 130, figs. 47, 50.
1	Tomb	UE (N)	Diospolis Parva	SIP	Pan Graves	2	Oxford AM E 1919; Petrie, <i>Diospolis Parva</i> , 53, pl. 26.

1	Tomb	UE (S)	Edfu	MK		"10"	B. Bruyère et al., <i>Tell Edfou 1937</i> (Cairo: L'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1937), 129, pl. 24; Michalowski et al., <i>Tell Edfou 1939</i> , 49, 55, 291-310, pls. 24-5.
1	Tomb	UE (S)	Esna	MK		1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 86, 88, figs. 50, 56.
1	Tomb	UE (S)	Esna	SIP	M?	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 86, 88, figs. 50, 56.
1	Tomb	UE (S)	Esna	SIP		1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 86, 88, figs. 50, 56.
1	Tomb	UE (S)	Gebelein	MK-SIP	S Necropolis	1	Trapani, "Statuette femminili," 541, Table 3; Ibid., "Une particolare," 72.
1	Tomb	UE (S)	Qurna	MK		1	Hilton Price, <i>Catalogue of Egyptian antiquities</i> , 161, pl. 26.
1	Tomb	UE (S)	Theban region	MK		1	Berlin SM 9508; B. Hornemann, <i>Types of Ancient Egyptian Statuary</i> , T 836.
1	Temple	Red Sea	Gebel Zeit	I.MK/SIP		12+	Mey et al., "Installations rupestres du Moyen et du Nouvel Empire," <i>MDAIK</i> 36 (1980): 310-314, fig. 5, pl. 81; Castel et al., "Découverte de mines pharaoniques au bord de la Mer Rouge," <i>Archéologia</i> 192-3 (July/August 1984): 50-1, figs. 2-4; Castel et al., "Gebel Zeit. Pharaonische Bergwerke an den Ufern des Roten

							Meeres," <i>Antike Welt</i> 16.3 (1985): 19-20, figs. 10, 12; Castel et al., "Fouilles de Gebel Zeit (Mer Rouge): Première et deuxième campagnes (1982-83)," <i>ASAE</i> 70 (1984-1985): 106, pl. 4.7, 9, 10; Posener-Kriéger, "Les Travaux 1985-1986," 381, pl. 71a.
1	Town	UE (N)	Badari	SIP	Pan Grave hut	1	Brunton et al., <i>Qau III</i> , 7, pls. 9-10.
1	Town	UE (N)	Koptos	SIP?	In house	1	B. Favolle, <i>Le livre du Musée de Lyon</i> (Lyon: Emmanuel Vitte, 1958), 81.
1	Town	UE (S)	Deir el-Medina	e.18D.	heirloom	1	Bruyere, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pl. XV.1.
1	Town	UE (S)	Deir el-Medina	MK-SIP	heirloom, Trash E of village	1	Trapani, "Statuette Femminili," 537-9, Table 1; Ibid., "A Deposit of Female Figurines," 458.
1	w/o	UE (N)	Koptos	SIP		1	Hayes, <i>Scepter</i> II, 18, fig. 6.
1	w/o	UE (S)	Gebelein	MK?		2	One of those may be Berlin ÄM 14158. Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 16, 124, 130, figs. 47, 50; Oxford Ash. E 1890.330.
2	Tomb	ME	Abusir el-Meleq	18D.	F	1	Berlin SM 18742: Scharff, <i>Abusir el-Meleq</i> , 95, pl. 71.
2	Tomb	UE (N)	Abydos	SIP		1	Peet, <i>Cemeteries of Abydos</i> II, 63-64, pl. 14.2.
2	Tomb	UE (N)	Abydos	SIP?	F15	2	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 16, 133, fig. 53.

2	Tomb	UE (N)	Balabish	18D.		1	Wainwright, <i>Balabish</i> , 56, pl. 19.3.
2	Tomb	UE (N)	Dendara	MK	M	1	Petrie, <i>Dendereh</i> , pl. 21.
2	Tomb	UE (S)	Deir el-Ballas	18D.		1	C.L. Shartzter, "House E," in <i>Deir el-Ballas: Preliminary report on the Deir el-Ballas Expedition 1980-1986</i> , ed. P. Lacovara (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 9.
2	Tomb	UE (S)	Edfu	MK		"20"	H. Henné, <i>Rapport sur les fouilles de Tell Edfou 1923-4</i> (Cairo: IFAO, 1925), 24, pl. 27; Bruyère et al., <i>Tell Edfou</i> , 129, pl. 34; Michalowski et al., <i>Tell Edfou 1938</i> , 105-13, pls. 34-5; Michalowski et al., <i>Tell Edfou 1939</i> , 135, fig. 54; 1950, 198, pl. 23.
2	Tomb	UE (S)	Esna	MK	M?	2	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 88-89, figs. 49-50.
2	Tomb	UE (S)	Esna	SIP	M?	1	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 88-89, figs. 49-50.
2	Tomb	UE (S)	Esna	SIP		3	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 88-89, figs. 49-50.
2	Tomb	UE (S)	Gebelein	MK-e.NK	S Necropolis	3	Trapani, "Statuette femminili," 541, fig. 8, Table 3; Ibid., "Une particolare," 72, fig. 4.
2	Tomb	UE (S)	Qurna	SIP	M	1	Hayes, <i>Scepter II</i> , 16-17, fig. 6.
2	Temple	UE (S)	Deir el-Bahari	18D.		25+	H.R. Hall, "The temple and its excavation," in <i>The Xith Dynasty Temple At Deir el-Bahari I</i> , ed. E. Naville (London: EEF, 1907), 16, pls. 24, 32.

2	Temple	UE (S)	Hierakonopolis	SIP?	Foundation deposit	1	Hayes, <i>Scepter</i> II, 16-17, fig. 6.
2	Temple	UE (S)	Karnak	e.18D.	Mut Precinct	1	Waraska, <i>Female Figurines</i> , 22-4, 176-7, Cat. 1.
2	Temple	Nubia	Faras	SIP/18D.		11+	Griffith, "Oxford excavations in Nubia," 86, pl. 19.
2	Temple	Red Sea	Gebel Zeit	SIP/18D.		12+	Mey et al., "Installations," 311-315, fig. 3; Castel et al., "Découvertes," 49-51, fig. 7; Castel et al., "Gebel Zeit," 19-20, figs. 7, 13; Castel et al., "Fouilles," 104, pl. 4; Castel and Soukiassian, <i>Gebel el-Zeit</i> , 164, pl. 13.1; J. Leclant and G. Clerc, "Fouilles et travaux en Egypte et au Soudan," <i>Orientalia</i> 54 (1985): 393, fig. 61; J. Leclant and G. Clerc, "Fouilles et travaux en Egypte et au Soudan," <i>Orientalia</i> 55 (1986): 295-6, figs. 61, 64-5, 69; P. Posener-Kriéger, "Les travaux de L'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale en 1984-1985," <i>BIFAO</i> 85 (1985): 297-8, pl. 65.
2	Town	LE	Heliopolis	MK-e.NK	Kom	1	Trapani, "Statuette Femminili," 540, Table 3.
2	Town	LE	Memphis	SIP	Kom Rabi'a	1	Pinch, <i>Votive Offerings to Hathor</i> , 229.

2	Town	LE	Memphis	e/m.18D.	Level IV	1	Giddy, <i>Kom Rabi'a</i> , 28, 30-1, 41-2.
2	Town	UE (N)	Abydos	18D.	In houses	2+	Ayrton et al., <i>Abydos</i> III, 54, pl. 58.
2	Town	UE (S)	Deir el-Medina	18D. ?	Village	5+	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pl. 45.
2	Town	UE (S)	Deir el-Medina	NK	Trash E of village	3	Trapani, "Statuette Femminili," 537-9, Table 1; Ibid., "A Deposit of Female Figurines," 458.
2	Town	UE (S)	Edfu	17D.	Si 316	7	Moeller, "Tell Edfu," 96.
2	Town	UE (S)	Edfu	17D.	Si 654	1	Moeller, "Tell Edfu," 96, Fig. 10a-b.
2	Town	UE (S)	Elephantine	MK-SIP		1	Ballet and Lyon-Caen, "Le matériel de terre cuite et crue," 348, no. 833.
2	Town	UE (S)	Thebes	SIP?	Artisan's houses	2+	R. Vergnienx, "Karnak 1908: Fouilles à l'est du lac sacré (Manuscrit inédit du Docteur lortet)," <i>Karnak</i> VII (1982): 390.
2	Town	Nubia	Buhen	l.MK/SIP	debris of Block A, room 1	1	Emery et al., <i>Buhen</i> , 148, pl. 53, no. 76.
2	Town	Nubia	Sai	e.18D.?	heirloom	1	Doyen, "Due trait élémentaire," 114 (SAVIN/2206).
2	w/o	UE (N)	Abydos	SIP		1	Pittsburgh 1662-41: Patch, <i>Reflections of Greatness</i> , 36-7, Cat. 25a.
2	w/o	UE (N)	Koptos	18D. ?		1	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 16, 133, fig. 53.
1,2	Town	UE (S)	Elephantine	13-19D.		21	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 86-7.
1,2	Town	UE (S)	Elephantine	e/m.18D.		2	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 86-7, Figs. 28.2-3.

N/A	Tomb	UE (N)	Abydos	SIP		3	Randall-MacIver and Mace, <i>El Amrah</i> , 80, pls. 44, 48, 50.
N/A	Tomb	UE (N)	Abydos	SIP		1	Peet, <i>Cemeteries of Abydos</i> II, 63-64, pl. 46.
N/A	Tomb	UE (N)	Diospolis Parva	12D.		1	Petrie, <i>Diospolis Parva</i> , 44, pl. 26.
N/A	Tomb	UE (S)	Deir el-Medina	18D.	FC	1	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 15, 164-166, fig. 86.
N/A	Tomb	UE (S)	Dra Abu el-Naga	MK-SIP	TT 11-12	1	Menédez, "Figurines and statuettes," no. 6.
N/A	Tomb	UE (S)	Edfu	MK		"30"	Michalowski et al., <i>Tell Edfou</i> 1938, 105-111, pl. 35; Michalowski et al., <i>Tell Edfou</i> 1939, 198-210, pls. 23-4.
N/A	Tomb	UE (S)	Esna	MK		2	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 88-89, figs. 55-57.
N/A	Tomb	UE (S)	Esna	SIP		6	Downes, <i>Esna</i> , 88-89, figs. 55-57.
N/A	Tomb	UE (S)	Qurna	MK		2	Petrie, <i>Qurneh</i> , 3, 12, pl. 31.6-7.
N/A	Tomb	Nubia	Aniba	18D.		1	Steindorff, <i>Aniba</i> II, 85-86, pl. 46.
N/A	Temple	UE (S)	Armant	18D. ?	Temple refuse	1	Mond and Myers, <i>Temples of Armant</i> , 99, pl. 26.
N/A	Temple	Red Sea	Gebel Zeit	MK/SIP, 18D.		128+	Mey et al., "Installations," 311-315, fig. 3; Posener-Kriéger, "Les travaux," (1985), 297-8; Posener-Kriéger, "Les travaux," (1986), 381; Leclant and Clerc, "Fouilles," (1986), figs. 66-67.
N/A	Town	UE (N)	Koptos	SIP?	In houses	2+	Favolle, <i>Le livre</i> , 81.
N/A	Town	UE (S)	Deir el-Ballas	18D.	Houses	2	Shartzer, "House E," 7, fig. 5.2.
N/A	Town	UE (S)	Elephantine	MK-SIP	Houses	2	Ballet and Lyon-Caen, "Le matériel de terre cuite et

							crue," 348, nos. 809-10.
N/A	Town	UE (S)	Hierakonopolis	18D.	Street	1	Adams, <i>Ancient Hierakonpolis</i> , 14, pls. 7-8.
N/A	Town	Nubia	Buhen	1.MK/SIP	debris between Towers 13 and 14 of West Inner Fortifications	1	Emery et al., <i>Buhen</i> , 148, no. 151, pl. 53.
N/A	Town	Nubia	Uronarti	1.MK	Houses	3	Dunham, <i>Second Cataract Forts II</i> , pl. 38; Quirke, "Figures of Clay," 146-7.
N/A	Unclear	UE (S)	Medinet Habu	e.18D.	heirloom	1	OIM 14609: Teeter, <i>Baked Clay Figurines</i> , no. 44, 53, pl. 16a. See Hölscher, <i>Excavation IV</i> , 26, n. 3, for 18th Dynasty "town" of Medinet Habu.

Table 35 - Type C Figurines

Subtype	Context	Region	Site	Details	Date	No.	Bibliography
1	Temple	Nubia	Faras		18D.	1+	Griffith, "Oxford excavations," 86, pl. 19.12,8.
1	Temple	UE (S)	Deir el-Bahari		18D.	3+	Hilton-Price, <i>Catalogue</i> , 160, pl. 58; Hall, "The Smaller Objects," 16, pl. 24.2, pl. 32.8-9; Robins, <i>Reflections of Women</i> , Cat. 71 (BM EA 41107).
1	Tomb	UE	Sawama		18D.	1	Bourriau and Millard, "Sawâma," 33, pl. 17.

1	Tomb	UE (S)	Qurneh		18D. ?	1	Petrie, <i>Qurneh</i> , 12, pl. 20.607; Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , pl. 52.423.
1	Tomb	UE (S)	Qurneh		18D.	1	Petrie, <i>Qurneh</i> , 12, pl. 31.5.
1	Tomb	LE	Zawiyet el-Aryan	Z 244	18D.	1	MFA 11.2518: Dunham, <i>Zawiyet el-Aryan</i> , 54 (2c.), pl. 40. Pinch, <i>Votive Offerings</i> , Table 4 labels two of this type, but that is a miscount.
1	Town	ME	Amarna	MC, house	1. 18D.	1	<i>CoA</i> III, 140, pl. 79.12 (no. 122)
1	Town	ME	Amarna		1.18D.	1	<i>CoA</i> III, pl. 109.
1&2	Town	UE (N)	Deir el-Medina	Houses	NK	55max	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 16, 139, fig. 58, pls. 43-4; Backhouse, "Female figurines," 28-29, Figs. 2.10-12.
1	Tomb	UE (N)	Sawama	S.15	18D.	1	Bourriau and Millard, "Sawâma," 33, pl. 17.1.
2	Temple	Nubia	Faras		18D.	1+	Griffith, "Oxford excavations," 86, pl. 19.12,8.
2	Temple	UE (S)	Deir el-Bahari		18D.	2+	Hilton-Price, <i>Catalogue</i> , 160, pl. 58; Hall, "The smaller objects," 16, pl. 24.2.

							W. Spiegelberg, <i>Zwei Beiträge zur Geschichte und Topographie der thebanischen Nekropolis im Neuen Reich</i> (Strasbourg: Schlesier & Schweikhardt, 1898), 11-12, fig. 11; Horneman, <i>Types</i> , T 942.
2	Tomb	UE (S)	Theban area	FC	e. 18D.	1	
2	Tomb	UE (N)	Ramesseum	STI.Sa05/pu01	e. 18D.	1	Nelson, "La tombe d'une nourrice," 125.
2	Town	ME	Amarna		l.18D.	1+	Stevens, <i>Private Religion</i> , 85-87.
NA	Tomb	UE (N)	Deir el-Medina	3A, 1FC	18D.	1	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 14, 97, fig. 41.
NA	Temple	UE (N)	Deir el-Medina		18/19D.	2+	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 26, 90.
NA	Unclear	UE (N)	Medinet Habu		L.NK-TIP	1	OIM 14595: Teeter, <i>Baked Clay Figurines</i> , no. 10, pl. 4a.
NA	Unclear	UE (N)	Medinet Habu		L.NK-TIP	1	OIM 14596: Teeter, <i>Baked Clay Figurines</i> , no. 11, pl. 4b.

Table 36 - Type D Figurines

Site	Region	Details	Date	No.	Bibliography
Deir el-Medina	UE (S)		18-19D.	17max	Bruyere, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pls. XLIII-IV
Amarna	ME	MC N.49.21	l.18D.	16	CoA I, pls. 12.4 and 23.2; Stevens, <i>Private religion</i> , 85-87.
Memphis	LE	Kom Rabi'a	19-20D.	1	Giddy, <i>Kom Rabi'a</i> , 37.

Memphis	LE	Kom Rabi'a	l.18- e.19D.	1	Giddy, <i>Kom Rabi'a</i> , 39.
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Table 37 – Type E Figurines

Region	Context	Site	Details	Date	Material	No.	Bibliography
Nubia	Temple	Faras		18D.	Terracotta	18+	Griffith, "Oxford excavations," 86, pl. 19.1-2, 9-11, 17.
Nubia	Temple	Mirgissa		18D.	Blue glaze	4	Karlin, "Le Sanctuaire d'Hathor", 350, fig. 45.
Nubia	Fort	Uronarti		NK	Terracotta	1	Dunham, <i>Second Cataract Forts</i> , pl. 31A-B.
UE (S)	Temple	Deir el-Bahari		NK	Blue glaze	1	Liverpool 13.10.04.15: Bienkowski and Southworth, <i>Egyptian antiquities</i> , 40.
UE (S)	Temple	Deir el-Bahari		18D.	Terracotta	70+	Hall, "The smaller objects," 14, 16, pl. 24.2; Hayes, <i>Scepter II</i> , 163.
UE (S)	Temple	el-Kab	Foundation deposit	m. 18D.	Green glaze	1	J. Quibell, <i>El Kab</i> (ERA 3; London, 1898), 21, pl. 21.
UE (S)	Town	Deir el-Medina		18D.	Terracotta	2	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pl. XLIV.1.
UE (S)	Tomb	Deir el-Medina	3A, 1FC	18D.	Terracotta, wood	2	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 14, 97.
UE (S)	Tomb	Deir el-Medina	Tombs no. 1322-1325	18D.	Terracotta	1	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 14, 63.
UE (S)	Town	Elephantine		e.-m.18D.	Blue glaze	90	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 89, figs. 28.4 and 28.6.
UE (S)	Town	Elephantine		18D.	Terracotta	1	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 89.
UE (S)	Town	Medinet Habu	F/4, Eye 54a	L.NK-TIP	Terracotta	6	Teeter, <i>Baked Clay</i> , Cat. 1-5 and 12, pls. 1-2, 5a.
UE (N)	Tomb	Sawama	S.15	18D.	Terracotta	1	Bourriau and Millard, "The excavation of Sawâma," 33, pl. 17.1.
UE (N)	Temple	Dendera	Temple refuse	18D.	Blue glaze	1	Petrie, <i>Denderah</i> , 28, pl. 23.16.

UE (N)	Temple	Koptos	Foundation deposit	m. 18D.	Terracotta	3	W. M. F. Petrie, <i>Koptos</i> (London: Quaritch, 1896), pl. 15.74
RS	Temple	Gebel Zeit	NK shrine	18D.	Terracotta	1	Leclant and Clerc, "Fouilles," (1985), 393, fig. 62.
ME	Town	Amarna	WV, bedroom	l. 18D.	Blue glaze	1	<i>CoA</i> 1, 73; Stevens, <i>Private religion</i> , 87.
ME	Town	Amarna		l.18D.	Terracotta	67+	<i>CoA</i> II, pl. 23/5; P. Rose, "The evidence for pottery making at Q48.4," in <i>Amarna Reports V</i> , ed. B. Kemp (London: EES, 1989), 90; Stevens, <i>Private religion</i> , 85-87.
LE	Tomb	Zawiyet el-Aryan	Z 237, 244, 257	18D.	Terracotta	6	MFA 11.2519: Dunham 1978, 53-5, pl. 40.
LE	Town	Memphis	Kom Rabi'a	NK	Terracotta	1	D. Jeffreys et al, "Memphis 1984," <i>JEA</i> 72 (1986): 19.
LE	Town	Memphis	Kom Rabi'a	m-l.18D.	Terracotta	1	Giddy, <i>Kom Rabi'a</i> , 38.
LE	Town	Memphis	Kom Rabi'a	m-l.18D.	Faience	1	Giddy, <i>Kom Rabi'a</i> , 42, pl. 12.
LE	Town	Memphis	Kom Rabi'a	l.18D.	Terracotta	1	Giddy, <i>Kom Rabi'a</i> , 36.
LE	Town	Memphis	Kom Rabi'a	19-20D.	Terracotta	6	Giddy, <i>Kom Rabi'a</i> , 28-42, pls. 7-12.
S.-P.	Temple	Beth Shean	Locus 1085	19-20D.	Terracotta	1	James and McGovern, <i>Beth Shan</i> , 165-6, pl. 76.3.
S.-P.	Temple	Beth Shean	Inner courtyard	19-20D.	Blue glaze	1	James and McGovern, <i>Beth Shan</i> , 165-6, pl. 76.1.
S.-P.	Town	Beth Shean	Locus 1219	19-20D.	Terracotta	1	James and McGovern, <i>Beth Shan</i> , 165-6, pl. 76.4.

Table 38 – Type F Figurines

Region	Site	Context	Details	Date	Type	No.	Bibliography
Nubia	Kuban	Town		NK	1, 2a-b	8	Emery and L. P. Kirwan, <i>Wadi es-Sebua and Adindan</i> , 52-3, fig. 32-33.
Nubia	Mirgissa	Temple		18D.	2a?	1	Karlin, "Le Sanctuaire d'Hathor," 350.

Nubia	Sai	Town		NK	2	1	Doyen, "Due trait élémentaire," 114-5, SAVIN/0613
UE (S)	Deir el-Bahari	Temple		NK	2	1	Liverpool 13.10.04.16: Bienkowski and Southworth, Egyptian antiquities, 40.
UE (S)	Armant	Temple	Temple refuse	NK	2	1	Mond and Myers, <i>Temples of Armant</i> , 176, pl. 26.2.
UE (S)	Aswan	Town	in houses	NK-TIP	1,2a	3+	Honroth, "Bericht," 30-2, fig. 8; Kaiser et al., "Stadt un Tempel," pl. 58d.
UE (S)	Deir el-Medina	Tomb	FC	18D.	1	1	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 15, 124.
UE (S)	Deir el-Medina	Tomb		18-19D.	1, 2a	4	Valbelle and Bonnet, "Le village," (1976), 341; Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 14, 60; <i>Rapport</i> 7, 12, fig. 4;
UE (S)	Deir el-Medina	Town		18-19D.	2a-b	12	Valbelle and Bonnet, "Le village," (1976), 341, fig. 9; Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 16, 142, fig. 59, pl. 44.2.
UE (S)	Deir el-Medina	Temple	Temple refuse	NK	unclear	2+	Bruyère, <i>Rapport</i> 26, 35-6.
UE (S)	Dra Abu el-Naga	Tomb	Area of TT 11-12	NK	1 or 2a	1	Menédez, "Figurines and statuettes," no. 7, p. 308-9 and Taf. 26a.
UE (S)	Edfu	Tomb		NK	1,2a-b	10+	Michalowski et al., <i>Tell Edfou</i> 1939, 207-9, pl. 25.
UE (S)	Edfu	Town	in houses	NK	1	1	M. Alliot, <i>Tell Edfou</i> 1932, 21, pl. 15.
UE (S)	Elephantine	Town		1.18-21D.	1, 2a	32	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 86 and 89, Abb. 28.7.
UE (S)	Elephantine	Town		NK-e.TIP	1, 2a	15	Ballet and Lyon-Caen, "Le matériel de terre cuite et crue," v.1, 349-351, and v. 2, p. 276-278.
UE (S)	Karnak	Temple	Mut Precinct	1.18-19D.	1-2a	2	Waraska, <i>Female Figurines</i> , 177-9, Cat. 2-3.
UE (S)	Medinet Habu	Town	in houses	1.NK-TIP	1, 2b	6+	Hölscher, <i>Post-Ramessid Remains</i> , 11-13, fig. 12, pl. 6h; Teeter, <i>Baked Clay</i> , Cat. 4c, 13, 16, 26, 29, pls. 5b, 6c, 9c, 10c. Pinch (<i>Votive Offerings</i> , Table 6) erroneously described OIM

							14603 as having a woman and child.
UE (S)	Medinet Habu	Unclear		l.NK-TIP	1, 2a-b	27	Teeter, <i>Baked Clay</i> , fig. 4b-c, fig. 5a-b, fig. 6, no. 14, 15, 18-25, 27, 30-38, pls. 6a-b, 7b-c, 8b-d, 9a-b, 10a, 11a-c, 12a-c, 13, 14a-c.
UE (S)	Medinet Habu	Temple	Temple refuse	l.NK-TIP	1, 2b	2	OIM 14603: no. 17; Hölscher, <i>Post-Ramesside Remains</i> , 11, pl. 6H; Teeter, <i>Baked Clay</i> , nos. 17 and 28, pls. 7a and 10b.
UE (S)	Medinet Habu	Unclear		l.NK-TIP	2a	3	Teeter, <i>Baked Clay Figurines</i> , fig. 5a-b, fig. 6.
UE (S)	Thebes	Tomb	Ramesseum	NK	1	1	Brussels MR E 02950. Pinch, <i>Votive Offerings</i> , 233, n. 13 labelled it "Brussels MR E 295," but the museum number is incorrect.
UE (S)	Thebes	Tomb	Tomb refuse	NK	1	1	N. Strudwick, pers. Com. to Pinch, <i>Votive offerings to Hathor</i> , 233, note 14, no. 253a.121.
UE (N)	Abydos	Temple		l.18-20D.	1	2	M. Marlar, "Sex as a Votive Offering at the Osiris Temple," in Z.A. Hawass and J. Richards (ed.), <i>The Archaeology and Art of Ancient Egypt. Essays in Honor of David B. O'Connor II</i> , ed. Z. Hawass and J. Richards (CASAE 36; Cairo, 2007), fig. 5, p. 117.
UE (N)	Sawama	Tomb	S.102	18D.	1, 2a	2	Brooklyn 14.607-8: Bourriau and Millard, "Excavation at Sawama," 33-4, figs. 16 and 19.
UE (N)	Sawama	Tomb		18D.	2a	1	Brooklyn 14.606; Bourriau and Millard, "Excavation of Sawama," 33.
UE (N)	Sidmant	Tomb		18D.	1	1	W.M.F. Petrie, <i>Ehnasya: 1904</i> (London: EEF, 1905), 25, pl. 40.20.
ME	Ahmunein	Town		NK	2	1	Liverpool 1973.1.74: Bienkowski and

							Southworth, <i>Egyptian antiquities</i> , 31.
ME	Amarna	Town	NS, T.35.12	1. 18D.	1	1	CoA II, 40.
ME	Amarna	Town		1. 18D.	1	10+	Stevens, <i>Private religion</i> , 85.
ME	Deir Rifeh	Tomb	12A, 2C	18D. ?	1, 2a?	2	Petrie, <i>Gizeh and Rifeh</i> , 23, pls. 27b, f.
ME	Gurob	Unclear		18/19D.	1	1	Manchester 613: Griffith, <i>Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities</i> , 55.
ME	Gurob	Unclear		18-19D.	2a	1	Manchester 614: Griffith, <i>Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities</i> , 55.
ME	Gurob	Tomb	FC	18D.	2b	1	Brunton and Engelbach, <i>Gurob</i> , 17, pl. 13.6.
ME	Gurob	Tomb	C	18D.?	2b	1	Brunton and Engelbach, <i>Gurob</i> , pl. 25.20.
ME	Gurob	Tomb		NK	1,2b	2	Brunton and Engelbach, <i>Gurob</i> , pl. 47.
ME	Gurob	Town	in houses	18/19D.	1,2a-b	5+	Petrie, <i>Kahun, Gurob, and Hawara</i> , 37,-8, pl. 18.32-3, 37; Thomas, <i>Gurob</i> , 82-3, pls. 54-5.
ME	Hermopolis	Temple	Temple refuse	NK	2a	1	Roeder, <i>Vorläufiger</i> , 110, pl. 25e. Pinch labelled it incorrectly as her type 6a.
ME	Kahun	Tomb	Tomb of Maket, Coffin 1	18-19D.	1	1	Manchester 4408 (website says 18D): probably Petrie 1891, pl. 27.12.
LE	Heliopolis	Town	in houses	1.NK-TIP	2	1	Abdel-Aziz Saleh, <i>Excavations at Heliopolis: Ancient Egyptian Ounû I</i> (Cairo: University Faculty of Archaeology, 1991), 310, pl. 43.9.
LE	Memphis	Town	Kom Rabi'a	NK	1	"8"	Jeffreys et al., "Memphis 1984," 7.
LE	Memphis	Town	Kom Rabi'a	m-1.18D.	1	3	Giddy, <i>Kom Rabi'a</i> , 28-42, pls. 7-12.
LE	Memphis	Town	Kom Rabi'a	1.18-e.19D.	1	3	Giddy, <i>Kom Rabi'a</i> , 28-42, pls. 7-12.
LE	Memphis	Town	Kom Rabi'a	19-20D.	1	11	Giddy, <i>Kom Rabi'a</i> , 28-42, pls. 7-12.
LE	Memphis	Temple	Temple refuse	1.NK-TIP	1, 2a-b	7	Anthes, <i>Mit Rahineh</i> 1956, pl. 27-8, pl. 49.
LE	Riqqa	Tomb		18D.	1	1	Engelbach, <i>Riqqeh and Memphis VI</i> (London: BSE, 1915), 19, pl. 22.6.
Sinai	Serabit el-Khadim	Temple		NK	2	2+	Petrie, <i>Researches in Sinai</i> , 147, pl. 151, 14.

S.-P.	Beth Shean	Temple		19-20D.	1, 2a	2	James and McGovern, <i>Beth Shan</i> , 165-6, pls. 76.9 and 77.3.
S.-P.	Beth Shean	Town	Locus 1249	19-20D.	1	1	James and McGovern, <i>Beth Shan</i> , 165-6, pl. 76.5.
S.-P.	Beth Shean	Town	Periphery	19-20D.	1	3	James and McGovern, <i>Beth Shan</i> , 165-6, pls. 77.1-2 and 77.4.
S.-P.	Beth Shean	Unclear	Locus 1087	19-20D.	2b	1	James and McGovern, <i>Beth Shan</i> , 165-6, pl. 76.2.
S.-P.	Deir el-Balah	Town		19D.	1?	1	T. Dothan, "The impact of Egypt on Canaan during the 18th and 19th Dynasties in the light of the excavations at Deir el-Balah," in <i>Egypt, Israel, Sinai: Archaeological and Historical Relationships in the biblical Period</i> (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1987), 151.
S.-P.	Deir el-Balah	Tomb		19-20D.	1	1	Dothan, "Female figurines," 150-2.
S.-P.	Deir el-Balah	Unclear		19D.	1, 2a	3	Dothan, "Female figurines," 150-2.

Table 39 - Type G Figurines

Site	Context	Date	Number	Bibliography
Ashmunein	Domestic	TIP	9	Spencer, <i>Excavations at el-Ashmunein</i> III, 49-50, 38-39.
Beth Shan	Temple	19D.	1	James and McGovern, <i>Beth Shan</i> , pl. 76.7.
Beth Shan	Town	19D.	1	James and McGovern, <i>Beth Shan</i> , pl. 76.8.
Deir el-Medina	Town	19-20D.	1	Bruyere, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pl. XLV.1.
Drah Abu Neggah	Funerary	18D.	1	MMA 12.181.216: Accessed from online museum catalog 1/20/2019.
Drah Abu Neggah	Funerary	?	1	Cairo TR 9847: Teeter, <i>Baked Clay Figurines</i> , 58.
Elephantine	Town	20-21D.	1	Ballet and Lyon-Caen, "Le matériel de terre cuite et crue," V.1, 349-351; V.2, 276-8.
Gurna	Seti I Temple	1.NK-TIP	2	Myśliwiec, <i>Keramik and Kleinfunde</i> , 181, 182 ill. 2166-7, pl. 32.2-3.
Hu	Funerary	18D.?	1	Petrie, <i>Diospolis Parva</i> , 53, pl. XXVI.N6.

Karnak	East Karnak	26D.	3	Redford, "Preliminary Report 1975-6," 14-15, pl. 9.
Karnak	Mut Precinct	18-26D.	12+	Waraska, <i>Female Figurines</i> , 30-3, 180-9.
Karnak	North Karnak	18D.	3+	Jacquet, Karnak Nord IX, 37-42, 62, and fig. 54: B.456, B.155, B.840.
Karnak	Secteur II	26D.	3	Leclère and Marchand, "Données complémentaires," 354, 365.
Kuban	Town	18D.	2	Emery and Kirwan, <i>Wadi es-Sebua and Adindan</i> , 52-3, fig. 33, objects H8-16 and C7-14.
Medinet Habu	Town	22-26D.	10	Teeter, <i>Baked Clay Figurines</i> , 58-64.
Quft	Unclear	22D.?	1	Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , 60, pl. LII.426.
Ramesseum	Temple	22D.?	1	Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , 60, pl. LII.430.
Thebes	Unclear	22D.?	1	Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , 60, pl. LII.431.
Tukh	Unclear	22D.?	1	Elsasser and Fredrickson, <i>Ancient Egypt</i> , 82 (Hearst 6-19522).

Table 40 - Plaque Figurines

Date	Region	Site	Context	Shape	No.	Bibliography
9-10D.	ME	Rifeh	Tomb	Femiform	1	Petrie, <i>Giza and Rifeh</i> , pl. 13.23; Ibid., <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , 61, pl. LII.437.
12D.	UE	Elephantine	Town	Sherd	1	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 88.
12D.	ME	Lahun	Town	Cuboid	6	Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , 61, pls. LII.448, LIII.443, 447, 457, 462, 473-4.
12D.	ME	Lahun	Town	Disk	13	Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , pl. LIII.
12D.	ME	Lahun	Town	Paddle	2	Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , 61, pl. LIII.444-5.
12D.	ME	Lahun	Town	Pillar	1	Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , 61, pl. LIII.446.
12D.	ME	Lahun	Town	Pyramid	1	Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , 61, pl. LIII.462.
12D.	ME	Lahun	Town	Triangular	2	Petrie, <i>Objects of Daily Use</i> , 61, pl. LIII.458, 460.
12-13D.	LE	Lisht North	Tomb	Bottle	1	MMA 22.1.1117 (accessed from museum online catalogue 3/4/2020).

MK	UE	Edfu	Tomb	Pillar	2	Michalowski et al., <i>Edfou</i> (1939), 207, pl. XXIV.337-8.
MK	UE	Edfu	Town	Rectangle	4	Michalowski et al., <i>Edfou</i> (1938), 112-115 pl. XXXVI.1-2, 4-5.
MK	UE	Edfu	Town	Paddle	1	Michalowski et al., <i>Edfou</i> (1938), 112-115, pl. XXXVI.3.
MK	UE	Edfu	Town	Bottle	1	Michalowski et al., <i>Edfou</i> (1938), 112-115, pl. XXXVI.7.
MK	UE	Edfu	Town	Humanoid	8	Michalowski et al., <i>Edfou</i> (1938), 112-5, pl. XXVI.6, 8-14.
13D.	UE	Elephantine	Town	Sherd	1	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 88.
1.MK	Nubia	Uronarti	Fort	Cuboid	2	Dunham, <i>Second Cataract Forts II</i> , pl. 38.
1.MK	Nubia	Uronarti	Fort	Paddle	1	Dunham, <i>Second Cataract Forts II</i> , pl. 38.
1.MK/SIP	Nubia	Buhen	Town	Pillar	17	Emery et al., <i>Fortress of Buhen</i> , 148-9, pls. 53-54.
1.MK/SIP	Nubia	Buhen	Town	Rectangle	9	Emery et al., <i>Fortress of Buhen</i> , 148-9, pls. 53-54.
1.MK/SIP	Nubia	Buhen	Town	Bottle	1	Emery et al., <i>Fortress of Buhen</i> , 148-9, pls. 53-54.
1.MK/SIP	UE	Elephantine	Town	Sherd	1	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 88, Fig. 27.7.
SIP	Nubia	Sai	Town	Paddle	sev.	Moeller, "Tell Edfu," 96 and fig. 11 p. 98.
SIP	UE	Abydos	Tomb	Rectangle	1	Pittsburgh 1917-234: Randall-MacIver and Mace, <i>El Amrah and Abydos</i> , 90, pl. XLVIII; Patch, <i>Reflections of Greatness</i> , Cat. 25b, 37.
1.SIP	LE	Tell el-Dab'a	Tomb	Cuboid	1	M. Bietak, <i>Tell el-Dab'a V</i> (1991), 310; I. Hein, "Kat. Nr. 173: Weibliches Idol," in <i>Phaaronen und Fremde Dynastien im Dunkel</i> , ed. Museen der Stadt Wien (1994), 174.
17D.	UE	Elephantine	Town	Sherd	1	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," 88, Fig. 28.1.
e.-m.18D.	UE	Elephantine	Town	Rectangle	4	Kopp, "Stadt und Tempel von Elephantine," Abb. 28/5, p. 86 and 89.
18D.	Nubia	Askut	Town	Paddle	1	Smith, <i>Wretched Kush</i> , 133, fig. 5.30 B.
18D.	Nubia	Askut	Town	Sherd	1	Smith, <i>Wretched Kush</i> , 133, fig. 5.30 D.

18D.	Nubia	Buhen	Town	Rectangle	1	Emery et al., <i>Fortress of Buhen</i> , 149, pl. 53, no. 1215 .
18D.	Nubia	Buhen	Town	Pillar	1	Emery et al., <i>Fortress of Buhen</i> , 149, pl. 53, no. 1217.
18D.	Nubia	Kuban	Town	Bottle	1	Emery and Kirwan, <i>Wadi es-Sebua and Adindan</i> , 52-3, fig. 33, object J8-24.
18D.	Nubia	Kuban	Town	Femiform	2	Emery and Kirwan, <i>Wadi es-Sebua and Adindan</i> , 52-3, fig. 33.
18D.	Nubia	Kuban	Town	Rectangle	1	Emery and Kirwan, <i>Wadi es-Sebua and Adindan</i> , 52-3, fig. 33, object C7-6.
18D.	Nubia	Kuban	Town	Seated	3	Emery and Kirwan, <i>Wadi es-Sebua and Adindan</i> , 52-3, fig. 33.
m.18-19D.	ME	Gurob	Town	Pillar	1	Brunton, <i>Gurob</i> , pl. XLVII.7.
1.18D.	ME	Amarna	Town	Disk	22	Stevens, <i>Private religion</i> , 89-92.
1.18D.	ME	Amarna	Town	Sherd	4	Stevens, <i>Private religion</i> , 89-92.
1.18D.	ME	Amarna	Town	Paddle	3	Stevens, <i>Private religion</i> , 89-92.
1.18D.	ME	Amarna	Town	Pillar	17	Stevens, <i>Private religion</i> , 89-92.
19D.	UE	Deir el-Medina	Town	Disk	20max.	Bruyere, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pl. XLIII.2; Backhouse, "Female figurines," 25.
19D.	UE	Deir el-Medina	Town	Sherd	7	Bruyere, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pl. XLV; Backhouse, "Female figurines," 25.
19D.	UE	Deir el-Medina	Town	Pillar	7	Bruyere, <i>Rapport</i> 16, 229, fig. 167, pl. XLIII2 and XLV.2.
19D.	UE	Deir el-Medina	Town	Genital	22	Bruyere, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pls. XLIII.2 and XLV.2.
19D.	UE	Deir el-Medina	Town	Humanoid	21	Bruyere, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pls. XLIII.2 and XLV.1; Backhouse, "Female figurines," 26, Fig. 2.6-7.
19D.	UE	Deir el-Medina	Town	Femiform	6	Bruyere, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pls. XLIII.2 and XLV.1; Backhouse, "Female figurines," 26, Fig. 2.8-9.
19D.	UE	Deir el-Medina	Town	Rectangle	5	Bruyere, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pl. XLV.2.
19D.	UE	Deir el-Medina	Town	Unclear	3	Bruyere, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pl. XLV.1.
19D.	UE	Deir el-Medina	Town	Bottle	3	Bruyere, <i>Rapport</i> 16, pl. XLV.1.
19-20D.	Nubia	Amara West	Town	Seated	7	Stevens, "Female figurines and folk culture," 425-6.

19-20D.	Nubia	Amara West	Town	Slab	22	Stevens, "Female figurines and folk culture," 421-4.
19-20D.	Nubia	Amara West	Town	Unclear	8	Stevens, "Female figurines and folk culture," 426-7.

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